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AREA HANDBOOK

for

NEPAL (WITH SIKKIM AND BHUTAN)

May 1964

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FOREWORD

This book is one of a series of country handbooks designed for use by persons who have need for such background information. The emphasis is on objective description of contemporary national societies, focusing on basic social, economic and political institutions. Treatment is intended to be comprehensive rather than exhaustive. The studies are introductory, and it is expected that the reader will have recourse to many other sources for more detailed information in areas of special interest. Extensive bibliographies are included for this purpose.

The authors have reached certain conclusions concerning the character of the society today and the kinds and direction of change which appear possible or probable within the near future; interpretive judgments are their sole responsibility. The study is in no sense a plea for any special point of view, or a recommendation for any specific policy. Its contents represent the views of the Foreign Area Studies Division of the Special Operations Research Office, The American University, and should not be considered as having official or definitive Department of the Army approval either expressed or implied.

The users of this work should consider it not as a final product, but as a basis for further research to fill gaps in the present study. The authors' conclusions are subject to modification in the light of new developments and information. Readers are accordingly urged to submit comments correcting errors of fact or interpretation, filling or indicating gaps of information and suggesting changes as may be appropriate.

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PREFACE

Nepal and its neighbors, Sikkim and Bhutan, emerged in the 1950's from the obscurity of nearly complete isolation from most of the rest of the world. King Mahendra, Nepal's determined and energetic sovereign, was seeking in 1964 to modernize and develop his country, and to establish for it a place as an active but politically nonaligned participant in world affairs, able to maintain cordial relations with both of its large neighbors, India and China, while avoiding entanglement in the contest between them. Sikkim and Bhutan, whose foreign relations are conducted by India, remained relatively remote but not insulated from forces which are changing the traditional order in both.

The three Himalayan countries attract attention for more compelling reasons than their mountain scenery and traditional cultures made exotic by unfamiliarity. They lie strategically between Communist-dominated Tibet and India on a frontier which twice in a decade has been disturbed by Communist aggression. Socially and politically, all have become involved in a process of internal change rendered difficult and potentially explosive because it was so long delayed in a changing world.

(On April 5, 1964, shortly after completion of this Handbook, Bhutan's dynamic Prime Minister, Jigme Palden Dorji, was assassinated at Phunchholing on the frontier with West Bengal. The circumstances surrounding his death were not immediately clear nor was the motive of the slaying known. The Prime Minister had been a strong advocate of modernization and, with Indian assistance, had been instrumental in inducing his country to undertake its first five-year plan, launched in 1961.)

The Sikkim and Bhutan sections of the Handbook were coordinated within the team and much of the research and writing were done by Frederica Muhlenberg. A visit to Nepal by the team economist, Frances C. Rintz, yielded both published and unpublished books and documents and some valuable first-hand information.

The authors extensively consulted and freely borrowed from the three-volume monograph prepared under a Human Relations Area Files subcontract by a group of scholars at the University of California and issued in 1956 by HRAF as a working paper. The social background section of the University of California study was produced by Stanley

Maron, Leo E. Rose, Juliane Heyman and Nikki R. Keddie; the political section by Leo E. Rose; and the economic section by Ravi S. Sharma, John H. Cover and Nikki R. Keddie.

Thanks are due to a number of specialists, both Nepalese and American, for valuable comment and advice. The contribution of seven persons in particular is gratefully acknowledged. Their counsel closed many gaps in information and cleared up many questions of fact and interpretation. Responsibility for error is, of course, that of the authors. Douglas N. Forman was unfailingly helpful on many aspects of the study. Ferdinand E. Okada acted as anthropological and economic consultant and read and criticized most of the chapters in the book. Leo E. Rose, Director of the Himalayan Border Countries Project, Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, and his colleagues generously made available their research facilities, loaned materials and advised on the political chapters. Margaret W. Fisher of the Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, also made many helpful suggestions. Hugh B. Wood, Professor of Education, School of Education, University of Oregon, furnished valuable counsel and bibliographical data, contributed source materials, and opened to the authors his extensive personal library on Nepal. John T. Hitchcock, Department of Anthropology, University of California at Los Angeles, loaned source material and took time from a busy schedule to advise on anthropological matters. David E. Alter, Jr. provided a preliminary draft for Chapter 10. The helpfulness of Nepalese and American officials, in both Nepal and the United States, is also gratefully acknowledged.

The appended glossary includes, in general, the names of frequently mentioned ethnic groups and only such terms as might be unfamiliar to the reader and which appear in more than one chapter. A few terms appear which, although mentioned in only one chapter, could not conveniently be defined there. The transliteration of place names is that approved by the United States Board of Geographic Names. The most common usages were adopted for personal names and Nepalese words. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (unabridged) was followed in the spelling of many Hindu and Buddhist religious terms.

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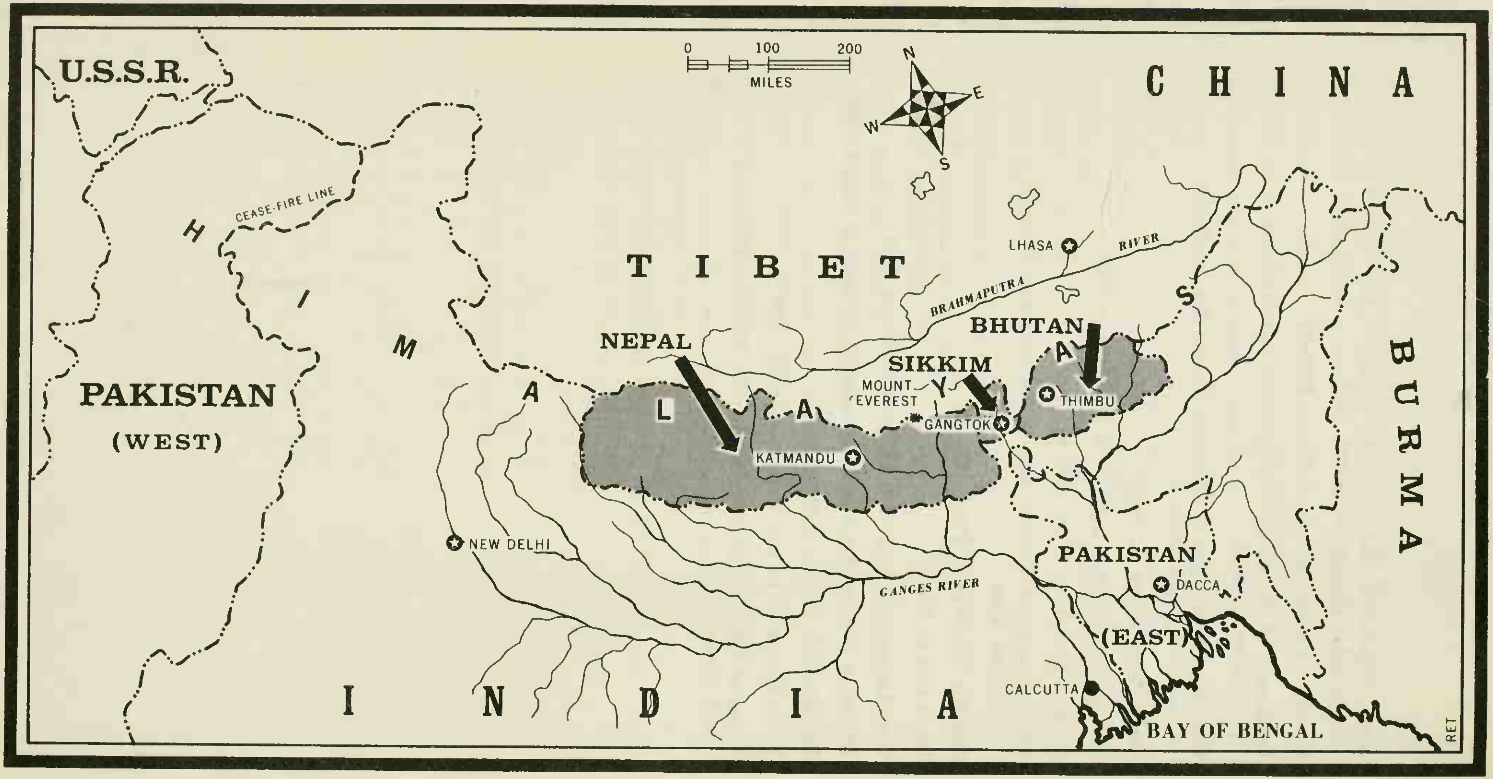
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Figure 1. Position of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan in South Asia.

NEPAL

SECTION I. SOCIAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE SOCIETY

On February 18, 1964, the Kingdom of Nepal celebrated the thirteenth anniversary of the revival of the power of its monarchy, which since the mid-nineteenth century had been wielded in the royal name by a line of hereditary prime ministers, the Ranas. The event signified more than a transfer of political authority. It marked the end of 100 years of carefully guarded isolation from the outside world and the beginning of an effort to transform a multiethnic, economically undeveloped country into a modern nation.

For several thousand years of its history the political entity known as Nepal consisted of only the Katmandu Valley. The rest of the territory now contained within the country's boundaries was occupied by a number of small, autonomous principalities. The state of Nepal in its larger, modern form did not come into being until the middle of the eighteenth century, when the ruler of the Kingdom of Gorkha, Prithvi Narayan Shah, subjugated the nearby Katmandu Valley, made it the center of his kingdom, and extended his authority by force of arms over the surrounding Himalayan areas. Prithvi Narayan's descendants continued to rule Nepal until the middle of the nineteenth century, when the throne fell under the domination of an ambitious military commander. Jang Bahadur Rana. The monarchy was not abolished, but its absolute powers were exercised thereafter by the prime minister rather than the king. The despotic regime of the Ranas lasted until 1951 when, under the impact of revolutionary postwar changes in South Asia, the family autocracy was overthrown and the king was restored to preeminence. Since 1951 the monarchy has been the key element in national political life and its strength has continued to grow.

By 1964 the country had assumed an active international role and had made modest progress toward domestic goals. Public education had expanded impressively; a few small industrial enterprises had been established; some roads had been built; the legislative foundations of a land reform program had been laid; and trade, freed from feudal restraints, was flourishing. Asserting a policy of "modified neutralism" or of impartial cordiality to the principals in the cold war, Nepal had established diplomatic relations with more than 30 countries and was receiving economic and technical aid from both non-Communist and Communist states, including the United States, India, the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union.

Probably more significant for the country's future than the advances that had been made were the means by which progress was to be continued and hastened. At the end of 1960, King Mahendra, angered by the contention of political parties, which had proliferated after the overthrow of the Ranas, and impatient with restrictions of his authority, took personal control of the government. Rejecting parliamentary rule as unsuitable for Nepal, he announced the establishment of the *panchayat system*, a pyramidal structure of assemblies and councils rising from the village through a series of indirectly elected higher bodies to the national level. Under royal tutelage and control, and *panchayats* are to draw the people into the national development program and involve them in the management of their own affairs. As the country's first uniform system of local administration the *panchayats* are to hasten the organic integration of the nation under the leadership of the King. In terminating the brief essay in parliamentary government, the monarch committed himself to a unitary political order which probably cannot be successfully imposed on Nepal's pluralistic society from above but will have to be painstakingly constructed from below. In early 1964 it was too soon to gauge progress.

Nepal compares roughly in size and population with the state of Illinois, but 97 percent of its approximately 10 million people live in small agricultural villages, many of them in remote mountain valleys accessible only by trail. The population of Katmandu, the capital and largest town, numbers no more than 125,000, and no other town has more than a third of that. The landscape varies from the rice paddies and grasslands and jungles of the Tarai plain on the Indian boundary to mountain heights, which 150 miles to the north on the border with Tibet soar about 25,000 feet. Climate ranges from the tropical heat of the lowlands to the arctic cold of the high altitudes and from an ample 70 to 80 inches of precipitation in the east to a third or fourth of that in parts of the west. In the mountainous northern three-fourths of the country, towering ridges separate the high valleys and the rivers isolate rather than connect the communities on their swift upper reaches.

The variety of this geographical setting is matched by the ethnic diversity of its inhabitants. More than 30 languages and a multitude of local dialects are spoken, representing such distinct families as Indo-European, Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic. Other differences—cultural, religious and social—combine with those of language to produce a comparable ethnic complexity. Considerably more than half of the population in western and southern Nepal reveals its more or less remote origin in the Indian subcontinent in its language, Hindu religion, social organization and north Indian physical traits. A different pattern prevails in the Tibetan linguistic and cultural connections, Lamaist Buddhism and Mongoloid physical type of the inhabitants of the mountain villages of the north and east.

The historical background of this contrast is the penetration into Nepal from early times of people and influences from India on one side and Tibet on the other. The influences from both areas were multiple and tended to change over time. From India came ancient Hindu, early Buddhist and later Hindu elements; from Tibet and beyond came various primitive tribal cultures, Lamaist Buddhism (an outgrowth of earlier contacts with an older form of Buddhism in India and Nepal), and assorted features of east Asian high degree of civilization. Change continued to take place in Nepal. Indian and Mongoloid physical types mixed; old ethnic identities were forgotten and new ones evolved; primitive shamanism was overlaid with Buddhism; Hinduism interpenetrated and sometimes replaced Buddhism and was itself influenced by it; and the transplanted Hindu caste system lost something of its rigor and structural complexity. The pattern which emerged from this long process of change in the mountain enclave of Nepal was distinctive but manifold. Indentities continued to be, and largely remain, ethnic, regional and local.

Nepal's economy is basically agrarian, most of the people gaining food and livelihood from the subsistence farming of small plots. Rice, wheat and barley are the most important products. Cultivable land is limited by the mountainous terrain, the climate and centuries of intensive exploitation. The country has few resources other than vast areas of forest and an almost untouched hydroelectric power potential. Industrial establishments are few in number and small in scale. The transportation system, although it includes air services and railroads, is limited and unintegrated. The greater proportion of goods is carried by porters, and most people who travel do so on foot.

The economy is heavily dependent on India as a market for its produce and as its supplier of such basic requirements as salt, kerosene, cotton cloth and other manufactured goods. India is also Nepal's outstanding source of financial aid and technical assistance for the development of the country. Dependency has other aspects as well. Indian currency, for instance, was legal tender throughout Nepal until 1960 and still circulates widely within the country, although the use of Nepalese currency has been made mandatory. India also absorbs most of Nepal's major export—its excess manpower.

Isolated by Rana policy from the changes taking place in the outside world, the country remained economically undeveloped, although some improvements were introduced in the 1920's. Since 1951 an expenditure of about $80 million on economic development, most of it supplied by foreign governments and international organizations, has resulted mainly in the extension of the road system, the establishment of air services and other public works. The agrarian base of the economy has been little affected. The current Three-Year Plan (1962–65) emphasizes development projects which will have the most immediate effect on increasing national income. The United States is financing aspects of the Plan concerned with improving the utilization of the nation's resources, and India is continuing to aid in the development of transportation and the hydroelectric power potential.

Expansion of the economy is heavily dependent on government expenditure since private investment from domestic sources is negligible. There has been some circulation of money for over a century, but the degree to which the nation is monetized is unknown. The banking system is rudimentary and is in the process of expansion. Most people subsist on the land and use the cash that comes into their hands for the essentials they cannot produce for themselves or acquire through reciprocal relationships with other caste or artisan groups. Although bank deposits are rising, most savings are still in jewelry or in private hoards and most credit is supplied by moneylenders.

An effort to increase agricultural productivity, and hence the income of the majority, must overcome a variety of difficulties. Aside from the lack of domestic investment there are problems of soil improvement, erosion control, irrigation, drainage and prevention of plant and animal diseases. The scattered villages of farmers and animal breeders working in family units do not provide the organizational framework for agricultural activity much above the subsistence level. Equipment of all types is needed but even small machines and modern handtools presuppose the knowledge to use them, and the country suffers from a shortage of trained persons in all fields. Above all, divisive attitudes of the segments of this multiethnic society toward each other as well as many of their customs are deterrents to communication and acceptance of improved techniques.

A fundamental problem in the evolution of a viable political system is the absence of any developed sense of national consciousness or identification among the bulk of the population. Despite the passage of almost two centuries since Prithvi Narayan first brought the whole of Nepal under a single central authority, the social foundations and emotional bonds of national unity have yet to develop in anything more than a very rudimentary way, and the country remains a cluster of isolated localities with little more in common than subordination to the same king and government. The perpetuation of strong local ties and loyalties was fostered by the policies of both the Gorkha kings and the Rana prime ministers. Although it was the former who first created the basis for a sense of national identity among the Nepalese, they also allowed many local rulers to remain in power and rule under the aegis of Katmandu, thereby facilitating the growth and semi-independent states. When the Ranas came to power they deliberately retarded the development of nationalist sentiment as a threat to their regime.

The ability of the central government to combat particularism is hampered not only by local loyalties but also by the administrative problems. District offices of the central government in areas far from Katmandu are of necessity fairly autonomous; it sometimes takes as much as a month to communicate instruction to them from the center. The *rajas* (rulers) of the old autonomous vassal states strive to retain their hereditary privileges, various ethnic and regional groups resist any transfer of loyalty to the larger community, and attempts by the central government to extend full control to the country's frontiers have provoked separatist stirrings.

King Mahendra in 1958 felt compelled to issue a decree calling on his people to refrain from using the term "Nepal" with reference to the Katmandu Valley only and appealing for a greater sense of national identity. The action was indicative of his concern with the problem of building national unity. If the task is an extraordinarily difficult one, the King approaches it with important assets. The most important of these is the symbolic value of the monarchy. It is the oldest and most firmly rooted political institution in the country. Even at its lowest ebb under the Ranas, the monarchy still retained sufficient prestige to prevent Jang Bahadur from deposing the King and accepting the crown himself when it was offered to him by a deputation of nobles. Regarded by many of the people as a reincarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu, the King is the personification of the state to the Nepalese and the recipient of their loyalty and respect.

Another important factor in the effort to create a more substantial sense of national consciousness is the new structure of government—the *panchayat* system—which went into full operation in April 1963 after several years of preparation. The *panchayat* structure with its four levels—local, district, zonal and national—is designed to bring every citizen of the country into participation in public affairs, directly at the local level and indirectly at higher ones. The class of professional organization constitutes another feature of the *panchayat* system. They are six bodies organized according to occupational or social status, such as workers, students and women, which include the entire population in their membership and are intended to stimulate class and national consciousness and to mobilize the efforts of the people in the economic development of the country. King Mahendra has stated that through the *panchayat* system he seeks to create a "new, original and national philosophy," and calls upon the people for enthusiasm, patriotism and collective efforts in the achievement of national goals.

Although the King now controls all major instruments of power and there are no significant challenges to that control in the present political context, the existence of many large groups which have not yet been integrated within the Nepalese polity constitutes a potential threat.

In the long run the King's perpetuation of his dominant position rests to a very large extent on his success in unifying a heterogeneous society with sufficient speed to prevent the appearance of grievances which could provide the basis for the development and organization of rival centers of power. The King has so far preempted the initiative in reaching such groups, and he must maintain it to retain royal control.

The task of welding a unified nation is greatly complicated by the pressures generated by the trans-Himalayan rivalry between India and China. When India gained its independence in 1947 and the British withdrew, the southward orientation of Nepalese foreign policy was continued much as it had been for more than a century before. The seizure of power by the Communists in China in 1950 and their subsequent invasion and occupation of Tibet, however, radically altered the configuration of power on which Nepal's foreign policy was based. Caught between the two great contenders, India and Communist China, and concerned about its own defense and sovereignty, Nepal adopted the policy of modified neutralism.

Whereas the primacy of British and subsequently Indian influence in Nepal was generally unquestioned before 1951, it later came to be increasingly challenged by China as it consolidated its position in Tibet. Although the postwar rise of Chinese power created conditions more nearly resembling a balance of power across the Himalayan fulcrum than had ever existed in the past and increased the flexibility and opportunity of Nepal's foreign policy, it has also vastly increased the dangers. These reached their peak in the fall of 1962 when Chinese troops invaded India on both flanks of Nepal. The immediate crisis has receded, but the danger of the situation remains and is likely to confront Nepal for many years to come.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL SETTING

For all but the last several centuries there is an absence of reliable information on the history of the area now known as Nepal. Although there are ancient monuments, coins and other cultural artifacts and archaeological remains which have survived as objects of study, they are isolated pieces of evidence which are of little assistance in penetrating the obscurity of the country's past and constructing a continuous narrative of the experience of its people from earliest times. Written materials date only from the fifth century A.D., and even though historical sources gradually increase in volume after that time, they fail to provide a basis for anything more than a vague and fragmentary description of the country's history.

An accurate and detailed account of Nepalese history does not become possible until the latter part of the eighteenth century, when the nation became unified under the King of the Gorkhas. The great body of the country's history before that time consists of folklore and legend—handed down through the centuries—in which gods and demons mingle with authentic persons and myths and miracles merge with real events. About the sixteenth century these legendary accounts, sometimes extending back to many centuries earlier, began to be committed to writing in documents known as *vamsavalis*. These are essentially genealogical chronicles of the kings and dynasties of Nepal, recounting the achievements, real or imaginary, of its monarchs and glorifying their reigns. Despite the fact that what little verifiable data they contain have become heavily encrusted with the accumulated fantasies of centuries of storytellers, the *vamsavalis* are the single most important category of source material on most of the country's history and the only source for the period before the fifth century A.D.

Corroboration for some of the details of the *vamsavalis* is found in the testimony of foreign writers. There are references to Nepal in the Buddhist literature of India and China, Vedic and Hindu religious and philosophical works—the Puranas, the *Mahabharata*, and Kautilya's *Arthashastra*—in the observations of travelers, pilgrims, and traders from China and India and in dynastic histories of China. Nevertheless, because of their inconsistencies, the clarification they provide is only partial.

Such information as is available on Nepalese history pertains almost exclusively to the Katmandu Valley; it deals very little, if at all, with all of that part of the Himalayan area which now forms the State of Nepal. The legendary dawn of Nepalese life opens with the story of the supernatural creation of the Valley, and from that time to the present it has been the focal point of the country's history. It has long been the largest population center, the site of a vigorous culture, a major trading entrepôt and one of the strongest military and political areas in the central Himalayas.

Lying athwart the main Himalayan routes, Nepal's development has been profoundly influenced by its relations with India, Tibet and, to a lesser extent, China. Indian culture manifested through centuries of war, trade, migration and religious pilgrimage has had the greatest impact. However, Nepal has not been simply a passive receiver of the cultural radiations of others, but has played an important role in transmitting elements of the cultures of India, China and Tibet to each of the others. Although it has developed in the process a unique civilization of its own, the dominant theme of Nepalese history is the strong and enduring effects of its relations with other nations.

EARLY HISTORY

According to the *vamsavalis,* the Katmandu Valley was once a lake, a contention supported by geological evidence. In the middle of this lake grew a lotus containing a jewel whose brilliance attracted a number of gods to the Valley. One of them, the deity Manjusri, is said to have opened a passage to drain the waters by striking the mountain range to the south of the Valley with a single blow of his sword.

The origin and character of the earliest inhabitants of the Katmandu Valley are unknown. Whatever the aboriginal population, however, it was succeeded by a group of people known as the Kiratas who migrated to the Valley from northeastern India in three major waves ending in the seventh century B.C. Racially Indo-Mongoloid and speaking a Tibeto-Burman language, the Kiratas lived under a system of tribal government and appear to have remained undisturbed in the Valley for a period of 700 years. Gautama Buddha was born about 563 B.C. in Lumbini, which is now the Nepalese village of Rummin-dei (Lumbini) in the Tarai, and by the end of the Kirata period Buddhism had become the common faith of the people of the Valley, who in the course of time became the Newar.

About the first century A.D., immigrants from India, the Lichavis, established themselves as the rulers of the Kiratas, and from then until the present time all the ruling dynasties of Nepal have been drawn from the plains of northern India. The Lichavis ruled the Valley with brief interruptions from the first to the ninth centuries, and during that period the Indian impact on Nepal was in one of its most extensive and significant phases. Powerful monarchs of India—initially the Kushans and after the fourth century, the Guptas—exercised considerable influence over Nepal without extinguishing its independence. The

Guptas, for example, were responsible for the establishment of a monarchical system of government in the Valley, replacing the "republican tribal democracy" which had existed up to that time. Another result of this relationship was the introduction of Hinduism into Nepal. It gained its initial foothold through the conversion of the ruling class about the fourth century and later received acceptance from many of the people. The growth of Hinduism did not result in the displacement of Buddhism, but led to the fusion of the two religions (see ch. 9, Religion).

Throughout the latter part of the Lichavi period, Tibet was becoming increasingly powerful and, under the great king Srong btsan sgam po, it eventually came to dominate large areas of China, Central Asia and the Himalayas. For more than a hundred years, between the seventh and the ninth centuries, Tibet held Nepal in vassalage, and for several centuries the influence of Tibet rather than that of India was paramount in Nepal. At this time Buddhists were migrating northward out of India and Nepal mediated much of the transfer of Buddhist culture from India to Tibet; Mahayana Buddhism, the Guptan script, and Sanskrit literature, as well as Nepalese artistic and architectural forms, entered Tibet from Nepal with lasting effect. The seventh and eighth centuries also marked the beginning of fairly frequent contacts not only between Nepal and Tibet but also between Nepal and China.

Near the end of the ninth century the Lichavis were replaced by the Thakuri dynasty, which held control of the Valley intermittently for the next several centuries. During the latter part of their reign the Valley was under repeated invasion not only from Indian states to the south but also from the mountain kingdoms to the west.

In the thirteenth century yet another dynasty of Indian origin, the Malla, was established in Nepal. Under the Mallas, the Newar culture of the Valley flourished, orthodox Hinduism was strengthened by the introduction of the caste system, and the power of Nepalese kings was extended far beyond its previous limits. The domain of the Mallas reached its greatest extent under Yaksha Malla in the middle of the fifteenth century. Upon his death, however, the kingdom was divided among his descendants and quickly fell into a state of anarchy.

FORGING THE MODERN STATE OF NEPAL

During the sixteenth century the territory now contained within the boundaries of Nepal was fragmented into scores of minor principalities which were gathered into four major groupings. In the east were the various tribal states of the Kiratas; in the Katmandu Valley were the three Newar kingdoms ruled by the Mallas; to the west of the Valley lay a group of petty lordships known as the Chaubisi Rajas; and on the far west was a similar set of states, the Baisi Rajas. Although many of the states of these four groupings nominally recognized the supremacy of several of the more powerful among them or, in the case of the Baisi and Chaubisi Rajas, of the Mogul emperor in Delhi, they were virtually independent and engaged in continual warfare. The absence of any political system embracing these states and the turbulence of their relations made possible the rise of the Gorkhas and, ultimately, the formation of the State of Nepal.

In 1559, Drabya Shah, the younger son of the Raja of the Chaubisi Kingdom of Lamjung, brought Gorkha—a small, adjacent principality west of the Katmandu Valley—under his dominion and established the line of kings which later became the monarchs of Nepal. During the next two centuries the position of the dynasty was consolidated by Drabya Shah's successors, and the territory of the kingdom was extended to include most of the area between the Marsyandi and the Trisuli Rivers.

The main thrust of Gorkha expansion, however, did not occur until the middle of the eighteenth century with the accession to the throne of the tenth in the Shah line, Prithvi Narayan (r. 1742–75). Extolled as a fierce and resourceful warrior king even among a people renowned for their martial qualities, Prithvi's overriding aim was the conquest of vast areas of the Himalayas and their incorporation into the territories of the House of Gorkha. In the second year of his reign he embarked upon a relentless campaign for the systematic subjugation of the surrounding kingdoms which lasted until his death and, continued by his successors, did not come to a complete halt until almost three-quarters of a century later.

The first and most critical phase of this undertaking was the conquest of the Katmandu Valley, a task which required 25 years to accomplish. Katmandu was not taken until 1768, Patan and Bhadgaon fell the following year, and by the end of 1769 the whole of the Valley was under the control of the Kingdom of Gorkha. Moving his capital to Katmandu, Prithvi Narayan established a policy which strictly excluded Europeans from the country, reformed the systems of land tenure and taxation, and executed large numbers of people whom he felt might constitute a potential threat to his position as the first king of Nepal. Domestic affairs occupied his attention only briefly, however, and the Gorkha advance was soon resumed. Meeting only slight opposition, Prithvi's armies subjugated the entire Kirata area to the east and by the time of his death in 1775 were in possession of territory as far east as Darjeeling (now a part of India).

The conquests of the Gorkhas continued under the leadership of Prithvi Narayan's descendants, most notably his younger son, Bahadur Shah, who acted as regent for his nephew from 1786 to 1795. The Gorkhas turned west and overran the Chaubisi and Baisi Rajas and, even farther to the west, Kumaon and Garhwal. Most areas were brought by conquest under the direct control of Katmandu. However, to avoid conflict with a few particularly strong adversaries, treaties of subsidiary alliance were concluded which often granted them a large measure of autonomy. Thus, by the end of the eighteenth century the territory of the Kingdom of Nepal extended from the southern frontier of present-day Kashmir all along the arc of the Himalayas to the heart of Sikkim.

While these conquests were being made in the west, Nepal became engaged in a quarrel with Tibet over a number of questions—primarily the circulation of Nepalese coinage in Tibet and the taxation of goods traveling between India and Tibet—which eventually involved Nepal in war with China. Nepalese invasions of Tibet in 1788 and 1791 challenged the suzerainty which the Chinese Empire, then at the zenith of its power under the Manchu dynasty, had established over the domains of the Dalai Lama during the preceding century and a half. In 1791 a Chinese ultimatum demanded the withdrawal of Nepalese troops. When it was rejected a Chinese army said to number 70,000 entered Tibet, put the Nepalese to flight and then—culminating a campaign regarded as even more extraordinary than Hannibal's crossing of the Alps—passed through the Himalayas and approached within a day's march of the Nepalese capital. Forced to terms in 1792, Nepal agreed to return territory earlier taken from Tibet and to send a tribute mission to Peking every 5 years, thereby assuming the nebulous tributary relationship to the Manchu Emperor which China had already established over Tibet and such other countries as Siam, Korea and Burma.

After this encounter with China, Nepal's expansionist energies, blocked in all other directions, turned toward the south. At the same time, however, the British in India were moving northward. They had arrived in India in the late sixteenth century and by the latter part of the eighteenth century the territory under their control extended up through the area of what is now East Pakistan and the Indian provinces of Bihar and Bengal to the lower reaches of Nepal. During this period their primary interest in the Himalayas lay in exploiting the commercial potential of the mountain states and in acquiring trade routes through them into Tibet and thence, it was hoped, to China. Although the British had been hostile toward Prithvi Narayan, fearing that the extension of his power throughout the Himalayas would jeopardize their plans, by the time of the Sino-Nepalese war they were seeking to put their dealings with Nepal on a more amicable footing. However, treaties of 1792 and 1801 between Great Britain and Nepal providing for the establishment of diplomatic and commercial relations were subsequently nullified by the opposition of ruling circles in Nepal. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, therefore, relations between Nepal and Great Britain were distant and unsettled.

After continued acquisitions by the British East India Company made its territories contiguous with the southern frontier of Nepal in 1801, Nepalese depredations on British possessions across the frontier caused relations between the two countries to deteriorate still further. Turmoil along the frontier continued for more than a decade and by 1814 it, along with the persistent refusal of Nepal to enter into trade and diplomatic relations, had become intolerable to the British. When Nepal rejected a British proposal that a joint boundary commission be established to recommend a settlement for the disputed territories and ignored an ultimatum which followed, Great Britain sent troops to occupy the contested areas and declared war against Nepal in November 1814.

The confrontation with British power decisively brought the course of Nepalese expansion to an end. Resisting until British troops menaced the Katmandu Valley, Nepal capitulated in 1816 and met Great Britain's demands in a settlement known as the Treaty of Sagauli. The territorial provisions of the agreement greatly reduced the area of Nepal and established the general outline of its present boundaries. Nepal was stripped of all its conquests west of the Kali and east of the Mechi Rivers, as well as large portions of the Tarai. In addition, the treaty gave Great Britain several means of making its influence felt in Nepalese affairs; Nepal was not to employ any European or American, nor any British subject, without the consent of the British Government, which was also given the right to mediate any dispute arising between Nepal and Sikkim. Moreover, it was agreed that there would be an exchange of diplomatic representatives between Great Britain and Nepal.

STRUGGLE FOR DOMESTIC SUPREMACY

After 1816 the militancy of the Nepalese expressed itself primarily in a fractional struggle for internal supremacy. The major contestants in this internal competition were two major families of the nobility, the Thapas and the Pandes. Their bitter animosities had resulted in conflict and bloodshed for generations, and their rivalry was directed toward possession of the prime-ministership, a position which had grown increasingly powerful since the days of Prithvi Narayan because of the incompetence or extreme youth of a succession of monarchs.

However, the antagonism between the two families involved much more than simply the question of who was to hold the office of prime minister. It also concerned a major issue of foreign policy. The Thapas, responsible for concluding the peace with Great Britain in 1816, had become identified with a comparatively moderate and cautious, though not entirely pacific, foreign policy, while the Pandes were vehemently anti-British and sought a resumption of the wars of conquest to the south. To forestall a demand for more strenuous measures, the Thapa prime minister, Bhim Sen Thapa, who maintained the ascendancy of his family while holding office from 1804 to 1837, pursued a policy of slow, piecemeal encroachment on the south designed to sate the belli cosity of the Pandes and of the army without being excessively provocative to Great Britain.

Concern for the security of its frontier in northern India therefore caused Great Britain to take a large interest in Nepalese internal affairs and, through the British Resident in Katmandu, to intervene frequently in Nepalese politics. British recruitment of Gurkha troops also began at this time. Impressed with the martial qualities of the Gurkhas during the war of 1814–16, Great Britain hoped that by providing employment for the otherwise idle troops the belligerence of Nepal's policy might be reduced and another serious conflict avoided.

The internal struggle also came to involve the question of who was actually to wield the authority of the throne, enervated though it had became. A single monarch, Rajendra Bikram Shah, reigned from 1816 to 1846 but because of his impotence, initially the result of his youth and later of his passivity, he seldom actually ruled. Consequently, there were continual machinations within the royal family to fill the vacuum around the throne. The conflicts which arose within the royal family became interlocked with the feud between the Thapas and the Pandes, and in the fluid tactical alliances which resulted the Pandes were usually found supporting the king or his legitimate heirs while the Thapas aligned themselves with other members of the royal family. Earlier it was the judicious disposition of the power of the throne which had preserved a semblance of equilibrium between the Thapas and the Pandes and prevented either from dominating the king completely. When the influence of the royal family was dissipated by the widening of the rifts within it, however, these divisions were exploited by a collateral member of the Thapa family to eradicate all remaining vestiges of monarchical power and establish himself as ruler of Nepal.

The primacy of the Thapas came to an end in 1837 when Bhim Sen Thapa was toppled from power, and there followed a chaotic decade, punctuated frequently by assassinations, unrest and foreign difficulties, in which the internal struggle for supremacy moved toward a final resolution. It culminated in a bloody slaughter in 1846 when the younger wife of King Rajendra, Queen Lakshmi Devi, gathered the nobles and ministers of the court at the Kot (Royal Court of Assembly) to determine who was responsible for the murder of her lover, a contender for the prime-ministership. Jang Bahadur, nephew of Bhim Sen Thapa and commander of a quarter of the armed forces, seized the opportunity to establish his own predominance. Troops under his command exterminated all those unable to escape the Kot, destroying virtually all of the Nepalese Government, and during the massacre he managed to have the queen appoint him prime minister and commander in chief of the army. Thereafter, with the full backing of the army, he expelled from the country all those from whom he could not expect complete loyalty, confiscated their lands, filled the government with members of his family and conferred on them and on himself the honorific name "Rana." Forcing the king and queen into exile in India, he kept the heir apparent, Prince Surendra, a prisoner in Katmandu to confer the legitimacy of the throne on his thorough and comprehensive control of the government.

THE RANA PERIOD (1846–1951)

With Jang Bahadur's assumption of the prime-ministership, a pattern of rule and a system of politics were established which prevailed virtually without alteration until the end of the Rana era in 1951. Jang Bahadur's de facto control of all governmental affairs was given royal sanction in edicts of 1846 and 1856 which transferred to the prime minister, or maharaja, all the absolute powers previously vested in the king and provided the legal basis for the authority of the Rana maharajas. Moreover, the practice whereby the appointment of the prime minister lapsed each year and had to be renewed by the king was abolished and the position of prime minister was made a hereditary possession of the Rana family.

According to the rule laid down by Jang Bahadur to govern succession within the Rana family to the prime-ministership after his death, the position was to pass, not from eldest son to eldest son in lineal descent, but laterally to his brothers, from eldest to youngest. After the last of his brothers had died, the eldest member of the next generation was to become prime minister, and the succession was then to run through the entire generation of brothers and cousins—to the eldest in turn—and in that manner through each following generation. Jang's purpose in instituting this procedure was to ensure that the prime-ministership would always be in the hands of a Rana of mature years. Having come to power partly as the result of the fact that the system of primogeniture governing succession within the royal family had often produced infant kings who were easily dominated by their prime ministers, he sought to prevent Rana control from ever becoming enfeebled in a similar fashion. In this he was entirely successful, although the system possessed inherent defects which were as grave as those he had tried to avoid.

In addition to the sovereign authority conferred on the Ranas by the throne, the strength of their position was buttressed by numerous other means. Ranas were placed in high positions throughout the government, the importance and rank of their office depending on their place on the roll of succession. They were also strongly entrenched in the army, a major source of their support. Traditionally, the position of commander in chief of the army was held by the person who stood first in the line of succession to the prime-ministership, and all male members of the family were automatically accorded high military rank at the time of their birth. It also became customary for the Ranas to intermarry with the royal family. Moreover, the Ranas cultivated good relations with the British in India, and the continuing influence of Great Britain in Katmandu was a major factor in the continuance and stability of Rana rule.

The system of rule brought into being by Jang Bahadur was oligarchical rather than dictatorial, however, for the extensive authority held by the prime minister was limited by the power which rested with other members of the Rana family. Few decisions of the maharaja could be sustained, nor could he hope to remain in office against the opposition of the most highly placed Ranas. Several prime ministers, felt to be either incapable or too progressive, were forced from office by combinations within the family. The most serious challenges to the control of the maharaja always came from other members of the family.

The establishment of Rana control, therefore, did not fundamentally alter the nature of politics. Possession of the prime-ministership was still the crucial objective, power and initiative were possible for only a small number of individuals, and conspiracy and assassination remained common phenomena. Moreover, the royal family, despite the diminution of its influence and prestige, continued to be drawn into the familial intrigues of the Ranas by those who sought to exploit its latent authority. Thus, though the structural effect of Rana ascendancy was the preeminence of the prime minister over the king, its major political effect was the exclusion of all other groups from competition for and exercise of power and the monopolization by a single family.

Nepalese history during the Rana period contains few developments of broad significance to the people as a whole and centers around the possession and transfer of the power of the prime minister, highlighted by several sanguinary aberrations from Jang Bahadur's rule of succession. The basic objective of the Ranas was the perpetuation of their control by maintaining the status quo. In the realm of external affairs every effort was made to insulate Nepal from the broadening impact during the nineteenth century of the European powers on Asia, and the outlook of the Ranas heightened the isolation already imposed by location and topography. Prithvi Narayan's policy of excluding Europeans from Nepal was reaffirmed by Jang Bahadur, was continued by his successors, and was not relaxed until after the overthrow of the Ranas. Few Westerners other than those who came to staff the British mission in Katmandu were allowed to enter the country, and permission for anyone to travel beyond the Katmandu Valley was rare, the only exception being the relative ease of access to the famous Nepalese hunting grounds in the Tarai. Internally, change was stifled to prevent the weakening of the foundations of Rana rule. Educational development was extremely slow, and the achievement of anything beyond literacy was a privilege restricted almost exclusively to the ruling circle. Although slavery and *suttee* (the traditional Hindu practice of immolation of the widow on her husband's funeral pyre) were made illegal early in the twentieth century, few other efforts were made in the field of social and legal reform to relax the severity of many of the country's laws and customs. The public works programs of the Ranas were at best only feeble attempts to ameliorate living conditions and were particularly deficient in the fields of transportation and communications. Moreover, the nation's limited resources were largely appropriated by the Ranas for their own enrichment rather than for the public benefit.

Relations with Great Britain

The coming to power of the Ranas wrought a fundamental change in Nepal's relations with Great Britain. Immediately upon becoming prime minister, Jang Bahadur adopted a policy of maintaining intimate and cordial connections with the British in India, which was pursued without deviation by each of his successors. There was a wide area of mutual interest underlying the tacit entente which existed for over a century between the Rana maharajas and the British viceroys who governed India. It was evident to the Ranas that the structure of their control would be precarious in the face of British enmity and that, by the same token, the friendship and support of their powerful neighbor to the south could do much to fortify their position. Consequently, Nepal closely followed Great Britain's advice on major questions of internal policy and foreign affairs. The British, on the other hand, while interested in the acquisition of trading routes through, and commercial advantages in, Nepal were primarily concerned with the security of their northern frontier with Nepal and welcomed and supported the maintenance there of a regime whose policies were designed to achieve a high degree of internal stability and reduce friction along the border to a minimum.

The most important tangible expression of the intimacy of the two countries was their military connection. Nepalese tribesmen were recruited for service in Gurkha regiments of the British and Indian armies more or less surreptitiously after 1816, but in 1885 Great Britain received from Jang Bahadur's successor an official and general authorization to continue the enlistment of Nepalese. Moreover, units of the Nepalese Army were placed at the disposal of the British Government in almost every major and many of the minor military conflicts within or involving the British Empire from the time of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 to World War II. In return for its aid in the Indian Mutiny, Great Britain retroceded to Nepal in 1860 the Tarai areas taken from it in

1816. For its assistance in World War I, Great Britain granted Nepal a perpetual subvention of one million rupees annually and in 1923, in the second Treaty of Sagauli, formally recognized its internal and external independence.

Relations with Tibet and China

Nepal's relations with Tibet, which had been marked by continual friction since 1792, became inflamed shortly after the Ranas assumed control. The major sources of discord were the ill-treatment of the Nepalese tribute missions passing through Tibet en route to Peking and the abuse of Nepalese traders residing in Lhasa. These issues, combined with a desire in Nepal to repossess the territories north of the Kodari (Kuti) and Kyirong passes which it had been forced to return to Tibet in 1792, caused Nepal to declare war against Tibet in 1854. The war was fought to a stalemate and a settlement was reached in the Treaty of Thapathali of 1856. In the major political provisions of the agreement both parties reconfirmed their special relationship to the Chinese emperor, and Nepal agreed to come to the assistance of Tibet if it should ever be invaded by a foreign power. In addition, Tibet agreed to pay Nepal an annual tribute, to allow Nepalese traders to reside and trade freely at Lhasa, and to permit the duty-free entry of Nepalese goods.

Despite the agreement, relations between Nepal and Tibet failed to improve appreciably during the rest of the century and were severely strained when Tibet was invaded by a British expeditionary force in the early twentieth century. Great Britain had been trying to establish political and commercial relations with Tibet since 1774, but all of its efforts were frustrated by Tibetan opposition. The aggravations of this situation to Great Britain were increased when it began to fear that czarist Russia—one of its major diplomatic antagonists not only in Europe but in the Near East, Central Asia and the Far East as well—was attempting to bring the government at Lhasa under its influence as a means of threatening the British position in India. Although the danger of Russian interference in Tibet was later seen to be largely imaginary, a contingent of British troops under the command of Colonel Francis Younghusband was sent into Tibet in 1904 to secure Great Britain's predominance at Lhasa, settle a number of long-standing issues between Tibet and British India, and open trade and political relations between the two countries. Although Nepal had agreed to assist Tibet in the event of invasion, the Nepalese Government recognized that compliance with the treaty would only earn the enmity of Great Britain and result in defeat. Therefore, Nepal withheld all aid from the Tibetans and continued its policy of giving full support to Great Britain, supplying the Younghusband expedition with several thousand pack animals and urging the Tibetan authorities to accede to British demands.

The circumstances surrounding the dispatch of the expedition provided a vivid demonstration of the pivotal importance of Tibet to the security of India, Nepal and the other Himalayan states. Although Tibet had become a dependency of the Chinese Empire in the eighteenth century, by the time British expansion reached the foothills of the Himalayas the effective influence of China in Tibet was beginning to ebb, and it soon disappeared altogether. Therefore, during the nineteenth century the existence on the Tibetan plateau of a weak and peaceful religious state which was largely independent of foreign control ensured that the security of India and the Himalayan countries would not be threatened from the north. The possibility of a Russian hegemony at Lhasa forced British policy to recognize this fundamental connection between Tibetan autonomy and the security of the Indian subcontinent. Since the time of the Younghusband expedition it has been axiomatic in Asian diplomacy that the destruction of Tibetan autonomy by a strong foreign power would probably result in attempts to expand its influence below the crest of the Himalayas which would endanger the peace of the mountain states and northern India.

This was demonstrated several years later when China attempted to reassert its authority over Tibet and concurrently tried to revive its influence in Nepalese affairs. China's suzerainty over Nepal, which was at most only nominal, had largely evaporated by the time the Ranas came to power. The tribute missions which Nepal sent to China rested more on commercial motives than on any sense of obligation or compulsion, and they appear to have been the only form of regular diplomatic intercourse between the two countries throughout the nineteenth century. From 1905 to 1911, however, the Chinese were pressing forward with a vigorous military campaign in Tibet to enforce their suzerainty there and made repeated assertions that Nepal was still a vassal of China. The Chinese military and diplomatic campaigns against Tibet were only temporarily abated in 1911 when a revolution overthrew the Manchu dynasty. Although a republican form of government was established, its policy on Tibet was the same as that of its predecessor. In 1912 the new government announced that Tibet was to be considered an integral part of the Republic of China and the military offensive was renewed. Tibet had declared its independence in 1911, however, and with the aid of Great Britain was able to hold off the Chinese armies on its eastern frontier.

Similarly, with the fall of the Chinese emperor, Nepal considered any justification for the tribute missions as having ceased; the last was in 1908—the one scheduled for 1912 was never sent. Thereafter, a succession of events—World War I, growing internal conflicts during the 1920's and 1930's, invasion by the Japanese, World War II and civil war—intervened to preoccupy China for the next half-century, and consequently the threat to the independence of Tibet and Nepal, and to the security of India, was removed.

The Fall of the Ranas

Conflict within the Rana clan rather than forces external to it was the decisive factor in the dissolution of Rana despotism. In establishing the procedure for the transfer of power, Jang Bahadur had foreseen neither the longevity nor the fecundity of his descendants. By the end of World War II there were literally scores of Ranas, yet only six had held the prime-ministership in the period between the time of Jang Bahadur's death and 1945; Rana Udip Singh, 1877–85; Bir Shamsher, 1885–1901; Deva Shamsher, 1901; Chandra Shamsher, 1901–29; Bhim Shamsher, 1929–32; and Juddha Shamsher, 1932–45. The hardiness of the prime ministers along with the gradual enlargement of the number of Ranas on the roll of succession greatly reduced the possibility of achieving power for many of them, caused them to grow discontented and intensified familial feuds and conspiracies. The growing danger to the prime minister from these malcontents prompted Juddha Shamsher in 1934 to prohibit those of illegitimate birth from attaining the highest offices, a move which rendered large numbers of Ranas eligible only for lesser positions. After 1934, therefore, there came to be three "classes" of Ranas; those of Class "A" were of legitimate, "B" of legitimized, and "C" of illegitimate birth. The exclusion of Class "C" Ranas from the succession, while successful in its immediate objective, caused great bitterness, and they were later to serve as a powerful focus for other sources of gathering opposition to the regime.

Another important factor in the overthrow of the Ranas was the influence of the nationalist movement in India. Indian nationalism was rapidly acquiring strength and momentum in the decade before World War II and was directed toward the achievement of independence from Great Britain. Many Nepalese living in India, cognizant that Great Britain's withdrawal would mean a weakening of Rana control in Nepal, associated themselves with the independence movement and took part in the "Quit India" campaign conducted by the Indian National Congress party during the war. They later provided a large part of the leadership and a nucleus of public support for the popular opposition movement which developed against the Rana regime. The association with the Indian Congress also had important implications for the social and economic objectives subsequently adopted for implementation in Nepal.

The monarchy also played a significant role in the activities of the groups which were coalescing in opposition to the Ranas. King Tribhuvan, whose reign began in 1911, was an early supporter of anti-Rana activities, lending them his covert encouragement and financial support. The Palace was implicated in a number of plots against the Ranas in the 1930's and 1940's and Tribhuvan ran serious personal risks to serve as a symbolic rallying point for the various opposition elements.

The first organized efforts against the Ranas from outside the clan itself took place in the 1930's. Several groups were formed secretly in Nepal—among them the People's Party (Praja Parishad) in 1935—by young men who sought the overthrow of the Ranas and the establishment of democratic government, but both groups were discovered and suppressed before they became a threat to the regime. No organized activity against the Ranas took place during the war, but after 1945 political agitation resumed. A number of political parties came into being during the next several years, the most prominent of which was the Nepali National Congress, founded in India in 1946. The Congress opened its campaign against the Ranas with a *satyagraha* (passive, nonviolent resistance movement) in support of a strike in Biratnagar in 1947 which had been forcibly suppressed by the government. Obtaining a withdrawal of the *satyagraha* by agreeing to institute liberal reforms, the prime minister, Padma Shamsher (r. 1945–48), promptly established a reforms committee and early next year promulgated the country's first constitution, the Government of Nepal Act, 1948. Padma's conciliatory spirit, however, and the liberal tendencies exhibited by the 1948 Constitution alarmed a powerful group of the more conservative Ranas headed by Mohan Shamsher. After forcing Padma to resign, Mohan took over as prime minister, postponed promulgation of the new constitution, and declared the Nepali National Congress illegal.

India was deeply concerned with these developments in Nepal. Having become independent in 1947, India had adopted the principles of political democracy and a mixed socialist economy and sought to persuade the Ranas of the desirability of moving rapidly in a similar direction. In the Indian view such reform measures became all the more urgent and necessary in 1949 when the Communists came to power in China and their invasion of Tibet appeared imminent, with ominous implications for Nepal at such a critical juncture. India's interest in Nepal at this time was concisely stated by Nehru in early 1950:

> If [freedom] does not come, forces that will ultimately disrupt freedom itself will be created and encouraged. We have accordingly advised the Government of Nepal, in all earnestness, to bring themselves into line with democratic forces that are stirring in the world today. Not to do so is not only wrong but also unwise. . . .

This argument was pressed on Mohan Shamsher during talks with Nehru in February 1950. Although it was evident that there remained a large area of disagreement between the two, the Ranas acquiesced in the establishment of a bicameral legislative body which was convened in the Nepalese capital in September 1950.

A crisis was reached in the fall of 1950. Neither the scope nor the pace of the reforms reluctantly granted by the Ranas were sufficient for the major political parties. They instigated sporadic uprisings in various parts of the country during the summer of 1950, and in late September the government announced the discovery of a plot by the Nepali Congress to assassinate the prime minister and other high officials. The invasion of Tibet by Communist Chinese troops in October added to the tension. Shortly thereafter, on November 6, King Tribhuvan, allegedly implicated in the Nepali Congress conspiracy and fearful for his safety, took refuge in the Indian Embassy in Katmandu and two days later was flown to India where he was granted asylum. Simultaneously, a general rebellion erupted throughout the country under the loose coordination of the Nepali Congress. By the end of November, however, regular government troops succeeded in breaking the insurrection. In the meantime, Tribhuvan's 3-year-old grandson had been proclaimed king by Mohan Shamsher.

The Rana victory was transitory, however, for the Indian Government continued to recognize Tribhuvan rather than his grandson as head of state and demanded not only that he be returned to the throne but also that constitutional reforms be made immediately to render the Nepalese Government more representative of the public will. Amenable to the latter proposal, Prime Minister Mohan refused to allow Tribhuvan to return. He was soon forced to capitulate, however. In the middle of December a second offensive was launched by rebel forces; government troops, previously loyal, began to desert to the other side; and 40 Ranas resigned from high civil and military positions and another 100 demanded that India's conditions be met. The adamancy of India, the danger from China, the deterioration of the domestic situation and the staggering loss of support from large sections of the Rana family compelled Mohan to meet India's terms. In January 1951 he agreed to an amnesty for insurgents, the restoration of King Tribhuvan, the formation of a constituent assembly, the inclusion of popular representatives in the Cabinet on the basis of parity with the Ranas, and the holding of elections by 1952. The following month the Rana political monopoly came to an end when King Tribhuvan returned to the throne and an interim Cabinet was formed which included five representatives of the people drawn from the Nepali Congress and five Ranas, with Mohan Shamsher as prime minister.

REVIVAL OF ROYAL POWER (1951–59)

Although King Tribhuvan had declared at the time of the formation of the new government that a parliamentary democratic system under a constitutional monarchy would be established, the creation of such a system was delayed for 8 years by the turmoil which followed the overthrow of the Ranas. In the period from 1951 to 1959 the chaos and fragmentation of the country made political stability—let alone the inauguration of democratic government—impossible and fostered the gradual reacquisition of supreme power by the King. For 8 years the power relinquished by the Ranas was held by a succession of interim governments appointed by the King, interspersed with brief intervals of direct rule by the monarch himself, and political parties became progressively enfeebled by internal dissensions. Chronic political instability was accompanied by frequent disturbances throughout the country which the government was often powerless to deal with. As the formation of a constituent assembly and the holding of elections were repeatedly postponed, politics became increasingly divorced from the objectives of the popular movement against the Ranas and disregarded the insistent necessity of relieving the country's economic stagnation. The great mass of the people, disillusioned when the hopes and expectations aroused by the overthrow of the Ranas were not fulfilled by the actual course of events, turned to the King as the only source of continuity and the major pivot of unity and strength.

Between 1951 and 1955 there were three different Cabinet governments and one period of direct rule by the King. The coalition Cabinet formed in early 1951 under Mohan Shamsher quickly proved unworkable and was dissolved in November. It was succeeded by a Cabinet dominated by the Nepali Congress party in which M. P. Koirala held the prime-ministership but, due to conflicts within the Congress, it fell from power in August 1952. King Tribhuvan then ruled directly until May 1953, when he called a second time upon M. P. Koirala—who by then had split entirely with the Congress—to form a government from his newly formed National Democratic Party. Koirala's second regime was so weak, however, that in February 1954 he transformed it into a coalition government to strengthen its position. This precarious alliance, which included representatives of three other parties in the Cabinet, was immobilized by disagreements between the constituent parties and survived only until January 1955.

With the disintegration of the coalition, Crown Prince Mahendra flew to Switzerland to consult with his ailing father—abroad for medical treatment—and returned in the middle of February vested with full royal powers to deal with the Cabinet crisis. He attempted to organize a new government but the effort failed, and he announced at the end of the month that he would rule directly for the time being. Two weeks later, on March 13, 1955, King Tribhuvan died while still in Europe and Mahendra ascended the throne.

By the end of Tribhuvan's reign the general situation in the country had deteriorated dangerously. Four years of freedom from Rana rule had brought none of the benefits expected, and in many respects the outlook was even more discouraging than it had been before 1951. The government's failure to implement promised economic reforms, the pettiness and corruption of many public officials, and the absence of law and order left the public disillusioned, frustrated and without confidence in the country's political leaders. The Nepalese rupee had dropped in value by almost half and inflation created severe hardship. The stagnation of the economy was made even worse by floods, drought and famine. The widespread discontent often erupted into extensive and sometimes unmanageable uprisings and disorders. There was rising Communist influence in the Tarai and the Katmandu Valley and, with the administrative system in a state of collapse, many of the more remote areas of the country were beyond the control of the central government. On three occasions it had been compelled to ask the Indian Government for the assistance of troops to suppress disturbances.

These conditions were attributable in large part to the chaos which prevailed in the country's politics. After 1951 the popular movement against the Ranas lost its cohesion and momentum and dissolved into numerous factions and groups. Concerned only with the attainment of power for its own sake and preoccupied by internal conflicts which nullified their effectiveness, the rivalries between and within the various parties produced chronic instability and paralysis in the government.

Because of the defaults of other potential centers of leadership, therefore, the Crown became the strongest political force in the country during Tribhuvan's reign. Under King Mahendra, the monarchy was to become still more powerful. He conceived of the king's role as a much more active and forceful one than had his father, and immediately after the latter's death he began systematically to augment further the power of the throne. This earned him the hostility of most of the political parties, particularly the larger ones, who felt that the expansion of royal influence and the return to royal councils of Ranas and members of their regime jeopardized their chances of arriving at power through elections. The King was subsequently unable to remain aloof from political conflict and criticism, as had been possible for Tribhuvan. With Mahendra on the throne, royal actions began to be publicly challenged, and many of the major issues of succeeding years were merely facets of the larger debate over definition of the limits of monarchical power.

King Mahendra remained in direct control of the government until January 1956, when he invited Tanka Prasad Acharya to become prime minister and form a government. Initially composed of an equal number of royal nominees and members of Acharya's own party, the People's Party, the Cabinet was later expanded to include more supporters of the King. Acharya demanded their removal and, when the King refused to do so, submitted his resignation in July 1957. Mahendra soon called upon K. I. Singh, a colorful *enfant terrible* of Nepalese politics, to form a new Cabinet. The daring and ambitious Singh immediately set out to challenge Mahendra's position by attempting to acquire independent control of important sources of power. The threat was easily countered, however, and in November Mahendra announced suddenly that he had accepted Singh's resignation. The King then ruled directly until elections were held in February 1959, although he was advised by a coalition Council of Ministers which was formed at the beginning of 1958.

During the period from 1955 to 1959 one of the major political issues concerned the purpose and timing of elections. The compromise agreement of January 1951 between the King, the Ranas and the political leaders had stipulated that the formation of a constituent assembly was to be the purpose of the elections. This was reaffirmed in 1954 by an amendment to the constitution, the Interim Government of Nepal Act of 1951. Although Mahendra had declared in July 1955 that general elections would be held in October 1957, he strongly opposed the formation of a constituent assembly. There could be no more fundamental challenge to the monarch's claim to ultimate sovereign authority than the preparation of a new constitution by elected representatives of the people. Skeptical of the sincerity of the King's promise and eager to validate their claims of strength by success at the polls, the political parties—particularly the Nepali Congress and the Communist Party of Nepal—continued to demand elections for a constituent assembly at the earliest possible date.

The issue of elections developed greater intensity during Singh's brief regime, and it was finally resolved in the period of direct rule which followed. On October 6, 1957, two days before the scheduled date for elections, Mahendra announced that it would be impossible to hold them due to the failure of the Acharya government to make adequate preparations. Since the King had not rescheduled the elections, a coalition of the major parties responded by threatening to begin a civil disobedience movement on December 8, 1957, unless a new date for elections had been fixed by then. On December 17, after 10 days of demonstrations, Mahendra designated February 18, 1959, as the date on which elections would be held. Although the coalition had wanted them to be held within 6 months, it acquiesced in the King's action and suspended the movement. Mahendra later announced that he was appointing a commission to draft a new constitution which would provide that a legislative body rather than a constituent assembly was to be the purpose of the impending elections. Although it had always opposed such a move, the Nepali Congress accepted the King's decision without protest, as did the other parties, and the final obstacle to the holding of general elections was thereby removed. A year later, on February 12, 1959, King Mahendra promulgated the new constitution, and a week later Nepal's first general elections began.

CHAPTER 3

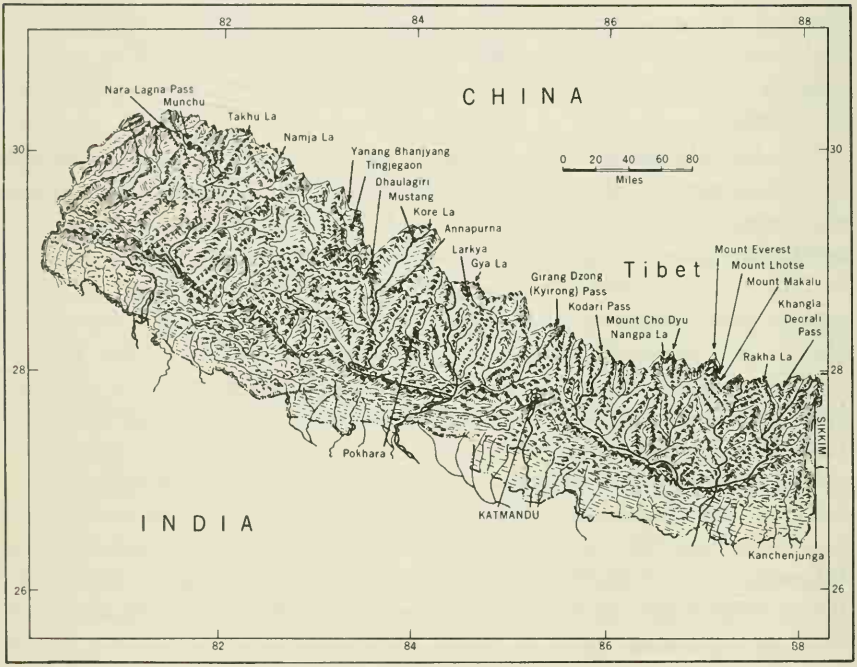
GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

Nepal, a predominantly mountainous rectangle, 90 to 150 miles wide and about 500 miles long, has a total area of about 54,400 square miles. Landlocked, it is bounded by Tibet on the north, Sikkim on the east and India on the south and west (see fig. 1). Katmandu, the centrally situated capital and most important town, is some 500 miles east of New Delhi and approximately 1,900 miles south of Peiping. The nearest seaport is Calcutta, 400 miles to the southeast at the head of the Bay of Bengal.

The boundaries generally follow prominent terrain features except in the southeast and south, where the border with India runs through the Tarai in the northern part of the Ganges River plain (also known as the Gangetic Plain). On the north, the frontier with Tibet—which in 1962–63 was surveyed and marked by a Nepalese and Chinese Communist joint boundary committee—extends for about 670 miles along the main Himalayan range. On the east the crest of a ridge jutting south from the peak of Kanchenjunga (28,208 feet) marks the 60-mile boundary with Sikkim. In the southeast and south the border is an extremely irregular line running for about 745 miles across flat plains dotted with swamps, jungles, cultivated plots and—especially in the west—a few densely wooded ridges. Demarcation stones along this section outline the frontiers with the three adjoining Indian states as follows: to the east, West Bengal (about 65 miles) and to the south, Bihar (350 miles) and Uttar Pradesh (330 miles). To the west the Kali River (called Sarda in India) flows for 125 miles between Nepal and the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.

Nepal presents a wider range of physical diversity than probably any other country of comparable size. The complex mountain mass in the north contains some of the world's highest peaks—six are more than 26,000 feet above sea level. To the south, no more than 100 miles from these barren, icy heights, the cultivated fields and steaming jungles of the northern rim of the Gangetic Plain are less than 600 feet above sea level (see figs. 2 and 3).

Numerous streams and rivers flow generally southward out of the mountains, meander across the Tarai plain and finally joint the Ganges in northern India (see fig. 4). The presence of fertile alluvial soil at stream junctions and at other places in the valley bottoms is a major determinant in the settlement pattern, most of the largest population concentrations being along the rivers and their principal tributaries. Virtually the entire country is drained by three large river systems: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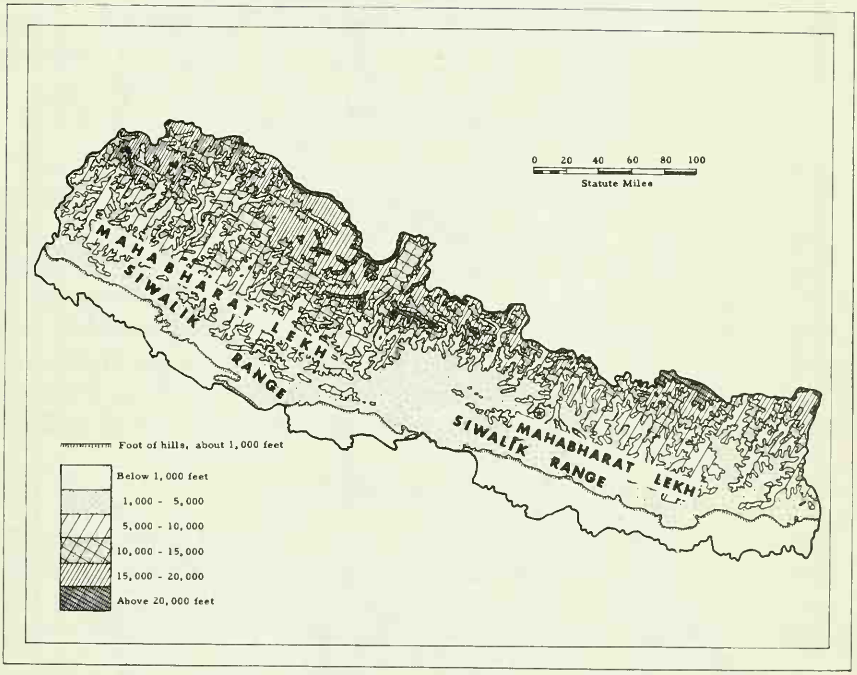
Annapurna
Larkya
Gya La
Girang Dzong
(Kyirong) Pass
Kodari Pass
Mount Cho Dyu
Nangpa La
Mount Everest
Mount Lhotse
Mount Makalu
Khangla
Deorali
Pass
Rakha La
Pokhara
KATMANDU
Kanchenjunga

Source: Adapted from Pradyumna P. Karan and William M. Jenkins, *Nepal: A Cultural and Physical Geography*, p. 19.

Figure 2. Landforms of Nepal.

in the east, the Kosi, with its seven large tributaries, three of which rise in Tibet, north of the main Himalayan range; in the center, the Narayani (called the Gandak in India); and in the west, the Karnali (called the Girwa in the Western Tarai and the Gogra in India).

The main factors affecting climate are the Himalayan massifs in the north and the moisture-carrying monsoons from the Indian Ocean to the south. Local variation is great, but in general rainfall is abundant on windward slopes and meager on leeward slopes and valleys. Seasonal changes in temperature decrease with increasing altitude until they virtually disappear at heights above 10,000 feet. Temperatures, mod-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SIWALIK RANGE
MAHABHARAT LEKH
Foot of hills, about 1,000 feet
Below 1,000 feet
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5,000 - 10,000
10,000 - 15,000
15,000 - 20,000
Above 20,000 feet

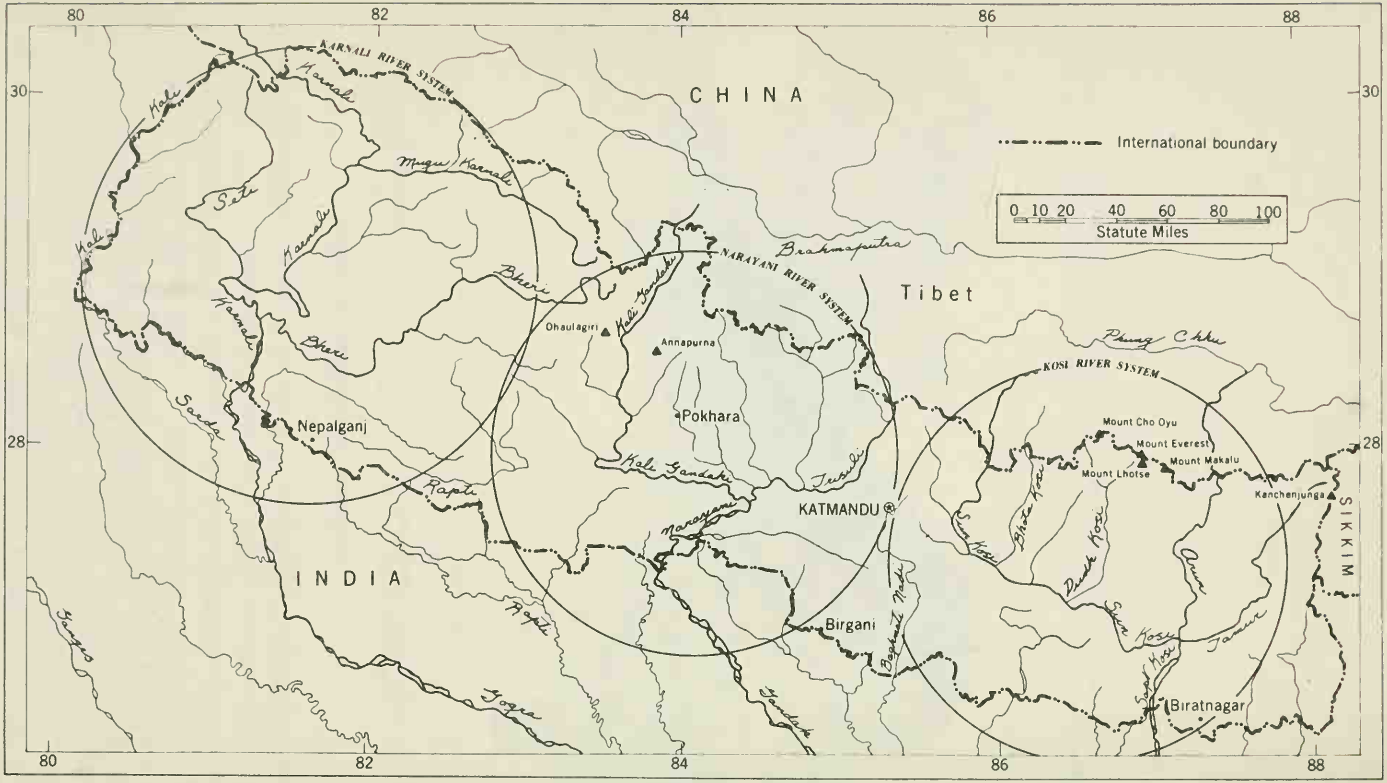
Source: Adapted from Pradyumna P. Karan and William M. Jenkins, *Nepal: A Cultural and Physical Geography*, p. 18.

Figure 3. Topography of Nepal.

erate at an elevation of about 5,000 feet, reach extremes of heat and cold at lower and higher altitudes, respectively.

Soils and vegetation are also diverse and may vary greatly within short distances mainly because of rapid changes in elevation. The largest areas of fertile soils are found in the Tarai and in the valleys and on the slopes of the foothills just to the north. Erosion is a serious problem almost everywhere, particularly on the steep slopes in the higher altitudes (see ch. 17, Agriculture).

Nepal, according to the preliminary report of the 1961 census, has a total population of approximately 9.76 million. Population density varies widely from region to region. The barren uplands of the Hima-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Annapurna
Pokhara
Trisuli
Narayani
Gandak
KATMANDU
Birgani
Bagmati Nadi
Phung Chhu
Mount Cho Oyu
Mount Everest
Mount Makalu
Mount Lhotse
Kanchenjunga
Sun Kosi
Bhote Kosi
Dudh Kosi
Arun
Tamur
Sapt Kosi
Biratnagar
Nepalganj

Figure 4. River Systems of Nepal.

layas are almost uninhabited, while the fertile Katmandu Valley is one of the most densely populated places in the world.

Most of the people live in rural settlements near water sources, and only six towns have more than 10,000 inhabitants. Despite difficult terrain and lack of transportation and communication facilities, there is a considerable amount of moving about in the country. Many groups seasonally shift from one elevation to another to take advantage of climatic conditions favorable to cultivation and pasturage; others, especially in the mountain districts, periodically go to India for temporary employment and to purchase supplies (see ch. 19, Trade and Industry).

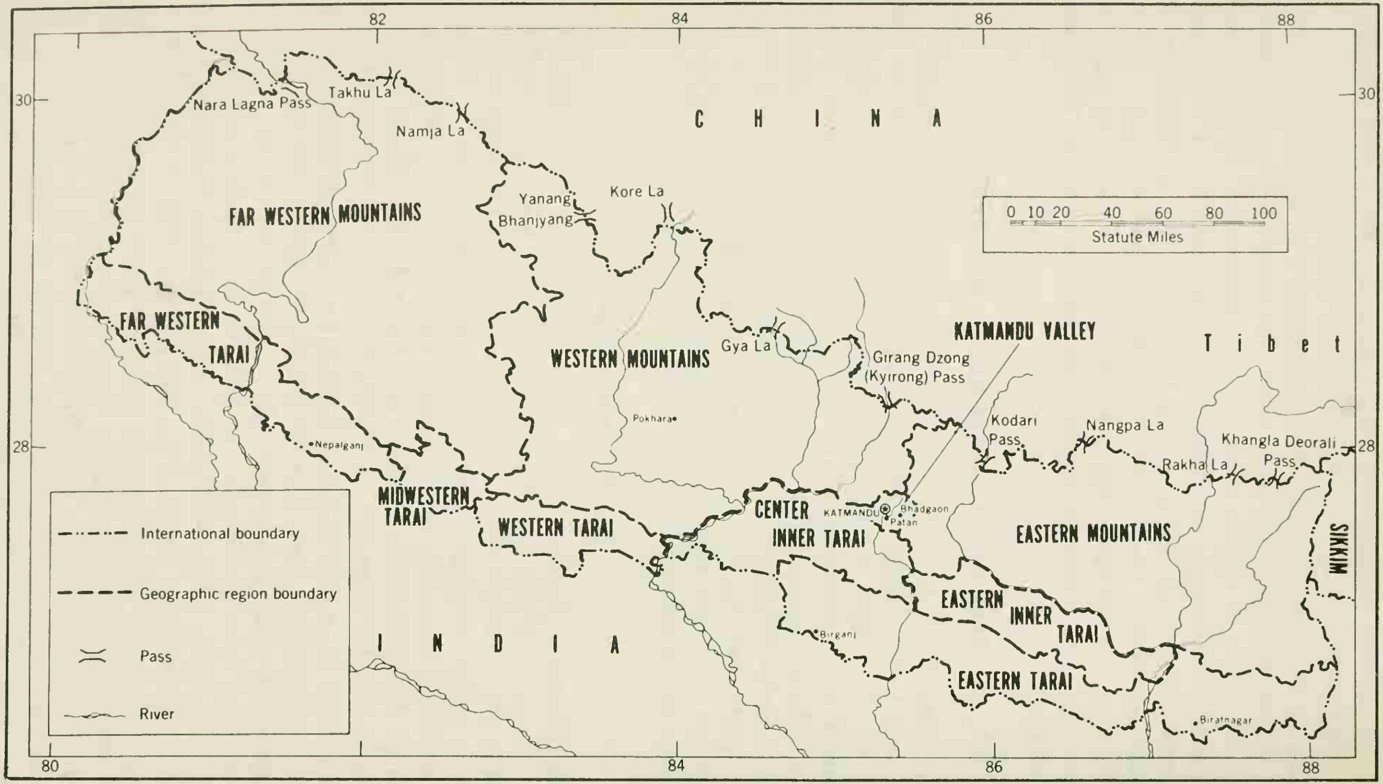
MAJOR GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

The country can be divided into three main geographic regions: the Mountain Region, which constitutes almost three-fourths of the total area; the Katmandu Valley (sometimes called the Nepal Valley), a relatively small, disc-shaped area enclosed in the east-central part of the Mountain Region; and the Tarai Region, a narrow belt which extends along the boundary with India in the northern part of the Ganges River plain (see fig. 5). Characteristics of terrain peculiar to each region are associated with sharp contrasts in soils, vegetation, climate, and even in the economic and social patterns of the people.

The Mountain Region

The Mountain Region is part of the Himalayan range. Its major heights in northeastern Nepal generally define the boundary with Tibet, while in the northwest they lie just to the south of the boundary. The gigantic peaks and deep gorges of the region provide much of the subject matter of the myths and folklore of the various local ethnic groups. Even for Nepalese living in the Tarai flatlands, the mountains are a near presence, too large and spectacular ever to be entirely out of mind.

The whole Mountain Region is marked by a series of parallel north-south ridges flanking deep, narrow, southward-sloping valleys. Extending east-west across the southern edge of the Region are the subsidiary Mahabharat Lekh and the Siwalik Ranges, both much lower than the main Himalayan range. The rivers in the principal valleys rise some 50 to 100 miles inside Tibet on the high plateau north of the boundary. These streams are older than the mountain mass through which they flow, having created their valleys by erosion as the mountain barrier lifted around them. Thus, the actual watershed is not generally the line of high peaks in the region itself, but the Tibetan plateau farther north. Drainage north of the main Himalayan range is into the Brahmaputra River in Tibet (where it is known as the Tsangpo); in the south, into the Ganges. The waters of both rivers virtually join in the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Nara Lagna Pass
Takhu La
Namja La
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Statute Miles
FAR WESTERN MOUNTAINS
FAR WESTERN
TARAI
WESTERN MOUNTAINS
Gya La
Girang Dzong
(Kyirong) Pass
KATMANDU VALLEY
Tibet
Pokhara
Kodari
Pass
Nangpa La
Khangla Deorali
Pass
Rakha La
Nepalganj
MIDWESTERN
TARAI
WESTERN TARAI
CENTER
INNER TARAI
KATMANDU
Bhadgaon
Patan
EASTERN MOUNTAINS
SIKKIM
EASTERN
INNER
TARAI
EASTERN TARAI
Birganj
Biratnagar
INDIA
International boundary
Geographic region boundary
Pass
River

Figure 5. Geographic Regions of Nepal.

delta region northeast of Calcutta before emptying into the Bay of Bengal (fig. 1).

The valleys, hills and slopes of the Mountain Region are densely populated wherever tillable soil can be found. Most communication routes are restricted to treacherous tracks feasible only for travel by foot. Precipitation in most places is sufficient to support dense forests at elevations up to about 13,000 feet. In settled areas, clearings have been made by cutting for timber or by burning to open up croplands. Large tracts of untouched timber remain in the more inaccessible areas.

Based mainly on differences in physical features and climate, the region may be subdivided into three general areas by two lines, one running generally northward from Katmandu and the other, about 150 miles to the west, extending northward from the foothills near the boundary with India. From east to west, these subdivisions are designated the Eastern Mountains, the Western Mountains and the Far Western Mountains (see fig. 5).

Eastern Mountains

The Eastern Mountain area (10,114 square miles) has four of the six highest peaks in the world: Mount Everest (29,028 feet), Mount Lhotse (27,890 feet), Mount Makalu (27,824 feet) and Mount Cho Oyu (26,867 feet). All are situated on a 30-mile segment of the boundary with Tibet. Forming a massive, white, saw-toothed range, they are visible on clear days from points throughout eastern Nepal. Trails leading up the principal valleys cross the Tibetan frontier over four difficult but well-known passes: Khangla Deorali and Rakha La to the east of the peaks, and Nangpa La and Kodari (Kuti) to the west.

Western Mountains

The 11,076 square miles of the Western Mountain area present a jumble of ridges and deep valleys projecting at various angles from the main Himalayan range. Relatively heavy precipitation supports some of the lushest vegetation in the country. Two mountains dominate the area: Dhaulagiri (26,813 feet) and Annapurna (26,502 feet). Both are within 50 miles of the town of Pokhara, which is less than 5,000 feet above sea level. The principal pass from this part of the region into Tibet is at Rasua Garhi, commonly called the Girange Dzong (Kyirong) Pass after the nearby Tibetan town about 50 miles north of Katmandu. Other passes to the west include the Gya La at Larkya, the Kore La at Mustang and the Yansang Bhanjyang above Tingjegaon.

Far Western Mountains

The Far Western Mountain area is the driest and most sparsely inhabited section of the Mountain Region. Its 18,879 square miles, comprising almost 35 percent of the country's total area, contain less than

20 percent of the country's population. The scattered settlements of subsistence farmers, animal herders or mountain porters are generally confined to the river valleys. The southward drainage pattern is interrupted in many places by east-west ranges around which the streams zigzag on their way to the Ganges. Three passes in this area lead into Tibet: the Namja La (above Mugu), the Takhu La and the Nara Lagna (on the Karnali River, west of Munchu), all at elevations of approximately 16,000 feet.

The Katmandu Valley

The Katmandu Valley, just south of the junction between the Eastern and Western Mountains, is a circular basin of only 218 square miles, said to be a dried-up lakebed. In it are the kingdom's three largest towns, including the capital, and it is generally regarded by Nepalese as the heart of the country. The valley floor, which is between 4,000 and 5,000 feet above sea level, is protected from icy Tibetan winter winds by the Himalayan heights to the north. On the south it is shielded from the extreme effects of the summer monsoons by the encircling Mahabharat Lekh range and it is drained by the area's principal river, the Baghmati Nadi. With ample rainfall and virtually a year-round growing season, the intensively cultivated soil provides food for this densely populated area.

The Tarai Region

The Tarai Region, with a total area of 8,969 square miles, consists mainly of a narrow belt of flat, alluvial land on the boundary with India. A northern extension of the Gangetic Plain, it varies between 150 and 600 feet in altitudes and between 5 and 55 miles in width. On the northern edge of this fertile strip is the Siwalik Range, sometimes called the Churia Hills or Churia Range, which rises to heights of almost 5,000 feet. This range is paralleled some 20 miles to the north by the narrow Mahabharat Lekh, with elevations up to 10,000 feet. The Tarai is crossed by numerous streams which, particularly in the east, during the annual monsoon floods carry down tons of silt, sand, gravel and huge boulders from the mountains to the north.

Precipitation varies widely from east to west. In the east, heavy rainfall permits intensive cultivation of crops throughout the year, and uncultivated areas are covered with jungle vegetation or high grasses. In the west, relatively light and uncertain rainfall limits cultivation to small plots cleared from jungles, which line the streams. Malaria is endemic in the entire region, and the jungles, particularly those in the far western section are the habitat of a wide variety of tropical wild life, including several species of large game animals and poisonous snakes.

Six subregions of the Tarai can be distinguished on the basis of topography and climate: the Eastern Tarai, the Eastern Inner Tarai, the Center Inner Tarai, the Western Tarai, the Midwestern Tarai (sometimes called the West Inner Tarai) and the Far Western Tarai (see fig. 5).

Eastern Tarai

The Eastern Tarai ranks next to the Katmandu Valley in the favorable conditions it offers for human habitation. It is generally level and well drained; the soil is fertile; and the rainfall is ample and dependable. Moreover, it benefits commercially from road and rail connections with nearby population centers in India.

Eastern Inner Tarai

The Eastern Inner Tarai consists mainly of the narrow eastern section of the Mahabharat Lekh range. Steep slopes limit cultivation to scattered patches of grain on the hillsides. The region is well covered with dense but often inaccessible forests. The valleys are deep, narrow, wet and infested with malaria-carrying mosquitoes. The sparse population is virtually isolated from the rest of the country.

Center Inner Tarai

The Center Inner Tarai is a transition area between the Eastern Tarai and the Katmandu Valley to the north. The terrain consists mainly of severely eroded hill slopes and forested mountains. Alluvial soil is found in the river valleys. Despite oppressive humidity and a high incidence of malaria, some of the country's major agricultural development and settlement expansion projects are underway in this subregion.

Western Tarai

The Western Tarai is a narrow strip of flat, fertile land devoted to the production of vegetables and grains. The landscape is dotted with villages, many of which are connected by cart roads. Population density ranks after that of the Katmandu Valley and the Eastern Tarai.

Midwestern Tarai

The Midwestern Tarai is the only region where the southern ridges of the Siwalik Range extend across the boundary with India. The characteristic terrain is rounded hills covered with open forests. Monsoon rains have severely eroded most of the slopes, and the valley bottoms are generally strewn with boulders, driftwood and other debris carried down by the runoff.

Far Western Tarai

The Far Western Tarai is the driest region in the country, but it still has ample rainfall for vegetation growth. Some monsoon seasons are marked by torrential rains and deep mud, leaving water standing in vast swampy areas during the periods between rains. Forests have been denuded in some accessible places by cutting to meet the demand of nearby Indian markets for timber or by burning to clear land for farming. Population density is almost as low as that of the sparsely settled mountainous area to the north.

MAJOR RIVERS

Three separate river systems, each having its headwaters on the Tibetan plateau, drain almost all of Nepal (see fig. 4). The Kosi River drains the Eastern Mountains; the Narayani, the Western Mountains; and the Karnali, the Far Western Mountains. After plunging through deep gorges, the waters of these streams drop their heavy sediment and debris on the plains. Most rivers in the Tarai overflow their banks onto wide floodplains during the rainy season. Many shift their courses during this period, and the receding waters leave vast stagnant pools in former sections of the streambeds.

Besides providing fertile alluvial soil for cultivation, the heavy flow of water through a widespread network of narrow river channels presents great possibilities for hydroelectric development. Meanwhile, the deep gorges are formidable obstacles to communications and contribute to the virtual isolation of many upstream settlements.

The Kosi

The Kosi River has seven major affluents. The principal one, the Arun, rises almost 100 miles inside the Tibetan plateau. Two other major tributaries, the Sun Kosi and the Tamur, flow generally eastward and westward, respectively, and join the Arun just north of the eastern section of the Mahabharat Lekh range, to form the southward-flowing Sapt Kosi. Its floodwaters move slowly across the Tarai within no defined banks from June to September each year and leave very heavy deposits of alluvium.

The Narayani

The Narayani cuts through the Western Mountains, and the gorges of some of its tributaries are the deepest in the world. Northwest of Pokhara, the Kali Gandaki tributary, with its streambed at an elevation of 3,630 feet, flows between the region's highest peaks, Dhaulagiri and Annapurna, which are only 22 miles apart. Occasional shallow basins at high altitudes with intervening rapid descents present great potentialities for hydroelectric exploitation. The lower Narayani is navigable for small steamers and timber barges in the winter season or when the river is not in flood stages.

The Karnali

The Karnali River is noted for its deep gorges, which are generally too wide to be crossed by locally built suspension bridges. Moreover, its current is too rapid in most places to be negotiated safely by the dugout canoes of the area. Thus, the river tends to isolate rather than link the settlements along its course and to hinder rather than facilitate travel to other parts of the country.

CLIMATE

Comprehensive information about the highly varied climate is lacking. The latitude of Nepal is about that of Florida, but great differences in altitude within the relatively small area of the country and the monsoonal alternation of wet and dry seasons make for sharp climatic contrasts between neighboring localities. Within a space of 150 miles from north to south are approximated most of the world's climatic zones, from Arctic Tundras in the northern portions of the Eastern and Western Mountains and the high deserts in the extreme northwest to the tropical jungles in the lowlands along the Indian boundary.

The complex arrangement of the mountain ridges, resulting in differences in exposure to sunlight and to the moisture-laden monsoon winds, also produces significant climatic differences in adjacent areas. In general, however, annual temperatures decrease with increases in altitude, and annual rainfall decreases from east to west. Violent thunderstorms and destructive hailstorms are common, particularly in the foothills and in the mountain areas. Since elevations are highest in the north and progressively decline southward, the country can be divided from north to south into four climatic zones: the Mountains, the Foothills, the Katmandu Valley and the Tarai.

The Mountains

The Mountain zone includes the upper part of the Himalayan range, with altitudes varying from 10,000 to 29,000 feet. Winters are long and severe; summers are short and cool; and permanent frosts prevail. The snowline is between 12,000 and 14,000 feet and may be higher in dry regions. The tree line is at about the same altitude but is lower in the dry areas. Precipitation varies markedly from one place to another but reportedly averages about 20 inches annually.

The Foothills

The Foothills zone includes the Mahabharat Lekh range and high-lying valleys up to 10,000 feet. Rainfall and temperature data are not available, but the climate may be classified as temperate, with warm, rainy summers and winters ranging from moderately cool to severe.

Katmandu Valley

The Katmandu Valley has a distinctive climate, which may be divided roughly into three seasons: rainy, hot and cold—the latter two being relatively dry. Rains usually begin in June and last through September, with the average annual fall approximating 60 inches. The cold season is from mid-October to mid-April, with temperatures in January, the coldest month, ranging between a daily average minimum of 36° F. and a maximum of 64° F. Snow and freezing temperatures are rare. In the hot months, May and June, the temperature seldom exceeds 90° F. at noon.

The Tarai

The Tarai zone includes the plains area along the boundary with India and the lower hills up to about 4,000 feet. The climate is usually hot and humid, during the period of heaviest rainfall from June to mid-October. From mid-October through February the climate is moderately cool with scattered showers. In the dry season, from March through June, the vegetation turns brown under a scorching sun. About 80 percent of the precipitation occurs between mid-June and mid-September. Average summer temperatures range from approximately 80° F. in the east to 90° F. in the west, and winter temperature from 60° F. in the east to 55° F. in the west.

SOIL, MINERALS, VEGETATION AND ANIMAL LIFE

Soils

The soils are diverse in composition and distribution. Scientific soil studies are lacking, but an analysis of samples from various parts of the country indicates, in general, a high iron content and a deficiency in humus, nitrogen and phosphate.

The alluvial soils of the Tarai are quite fertile except for occasional pockets of infertile sand and gravel. Composed mainly of brown clays and loam permeated with limestone, they respond readily to fertilizer and, if provided with a dependable water supply, are well suited to intensive agriculture.

In the Mahabharat Lekh and Siwalik ranges, soils are generally less fertile than those of the Tarai plains to the south. Brown or gray varieties appear in the conifer forests at the temperate higher altitudes, while shallow red and yellow soils prevail under the damp, subtropical vegetation at lower elevations. Among the southern base of these ranges a belt of sand, gravel and boulders deposited during the monsoon freshets averages about 8 miles in width. This belt, called the Bhabar, is of special importance because its soil supports a forest cover which collects the detritus washed down the mountain slopes, thus protecting the Tarai lowlands from an annual cover of infertile sand and gravel. In many places water from mountain streams disappears in this porous material and emerges again as springs in the Tarai.

In the Mountain Region, the soils at lower elevations are thin and stony in most places. However, soils suitable for sustaining meadows and forests appear in the valley beds and on the more moderate slopes. At higher altitudes much of the surface consists of naked rock, and the scanty soils consist mainly of sandstone, clay and limestone formed from basic parent material.

Soil erosion is widespread. Even in the cultivated plains of the Tarai, vast areas of croplands are lost or damaged annually by the monsoon floods. In eastern Nepal, particularly in the valleys of the Tamur, Arun and Sun Kosi Rivers, much forest land has been cleared for farming. Although the major portion of the area is still covered by forests, they are being depleted by erosion, indiscriminate cutting or burning, and by excessive grazing. Erosion accelerates as they retreat.

Minerals

Deposits of various minerals, among them coal, cobalt, copper, gold, iron, lignite, limestone, marble and mica, have been found. Their discovery, however, has been largely accidental, and the area covered by systematic geological surveys is very small (see ch. 19, Industry and Trade).

Coal outcroppings have been found along the Sapt Kosi River in Eastern Tarai and just north of the Midwestern Tarai near the base of the Mahabharat Lekh range. Cobalt deposits, some relatively large, are present in the Baglung-Gulmi area about 140 miles west of Katmandu and 50 miles north of the Indian border. Deposits also have been found in eastern Nepal near Dhankuta in the Tamur River valley.

Copper ore has been mined on a small scale in an area some 60 miles west of Katmandu, near the confluence of the Kali Gandaki and Narayani Rivers. Deposits of undetermined importance have also been worked at several other sites, such as Sikpasor Khani (*khani* means mine in Nepali), Wapsa Khani and Jantra Khani, all some 50 to 80 miles eastward from Nepal Valley, along the northern tributaries of the Sun Kosi River.

Gold is present some 20 to 60 miles west of Katmandu in the gravels of streambeds in the Kali Gandaki and Trisuli River valleys. Alluvial deposits also have been found west of the Dhaulagiri massif, along the upper reaches of the Bheri River. Some geologists believe that the source lodes are near the Tibetan border, particularly near Mustang in the upper Kali Gandaki Valley.

Iron ore deposits have been noted at various places in Katmandu Valley. Those southwest of Katmandu have been investigated by geologists attached to the United States Agency for International Development Mission in Nepal, but the geological structure of the area indicates that quantities are small. Deposits have been noted also in the Western Mountains near Nuwakot, south of Pokhara; in the Rapti Valley about 45 miles southwest of Katmandu; and in the Sun Kosi Valley at Khotang, some 100 miles southeast of Katmandu.

Findings of other commercially usable minerals have been made in widely separated areas. Small lead deposits have been found just south of Katmandu and lignite about 12 miles north of the city in the Baghmati Nadi Valley. Limestone is present in northwestern Nepal near Baglung in the Kali Gandaki Valley south of the Annapurna massif, near Jumla in the Karnali Valley west of the Dhaulagiri massif, and near Hitaura about 25 miles southwest of Katmandu. Marble formations occur near Godavari on the southern edge of Katmandu Valley. Some mica deposits are found near the northern edge of the valley and in the upper reaches of the Dudh Kosi River, just southwest of Mount Everest.

Vegetation

Forests cover more than a third of the country's total area. The deciduous trees which prevail in the moist Tarai are mixed with pines, firs and spruce at higher altitudes. On the heights of the extreme north, rhododendron bushes, stunted birches and junipers survive for short distances above the tree line, which is between 13,000 and 14,000 feet.

The forests of the Tarai contain an abundance of locally useful or commercially valuable species of rattans, palms and bamboo (also found at elevations up to 11,000 feet). Other valuable trees include: the khair, a species of acacia, from which a resinous gum is extracted and chewed with betel nut; sissoo, valuable for furniture making; karma, also used for furniture making and for veneer; and semal, used for plywood, matches and paper pulp (see ch. 17, Agriculture).

The Siwalik and Mahabharat Lekh ranges at altitudes of 1,000 to 4,000 feet support forests composed mainly of sal trees, the wood of which resembles teak and is used for construction timber and railroad ties. The coarse sabai grass of the area is marketed in India as a constituent of paper pulp. Above 3,000 feet the sal trees give way to pines intermingled with some oaks; between 5,000 to 10,000 feet on the Mahabharat Lekh range, walnuts, horse chestnuts, maples, wild cherry, birches, rhododendrons, larches, firs and some bamboos make their appearance.

On moist, southern slopes of the Mountain Region, oaks tend to replace the conifers, while on the shady, drier, northern slopes, both species are usually found. At altitudes of 7,000 to 11,000 feet, oaks are generally mixed with maple, spruce, fir and bamboo. Fir, rhododendron and birch predominate between 11,000 and 12,000 feet, and in drier areas, as on the Dhaulagiri massif, juniper, oak and ash are found. Birch continue to appear up to the tree line, at 13,000 to 14,000 feet. In some areas just below the snowline, at 12,000 to 14,000 feet, various grasses often provide good grazing grounds in sheltered spots during the short summers. Above 12,000 feet the stunted vegetation becomes increasingly thin until finally only lichens and mosses clinging to bare rocks remain.

Wild Life

Nepal has a wide variety of wild animals and bird life. The jungles of the Tarai are known as one of the best big-game areas in the world, and in the winter months guests of the ruling family are on occasion entertained there in elaborate hunting camps. The list of game animals includes tigers, leopards, panthers, black bears, elephants, rhinoceroses, buffaloes, wolves, hyenas, jackals and many species of deer. Reptiles, most numerous in the Tarai Region, include crocodiles and many species of snakes, including cobras and vipers.

PEOPLE

Demographic Data

The population, according to the official preliminary census report of 1961, was 9,756,390. Accepting that figure and the total of 8,743,478 reported in the 1952–54 census, the annual rate of growth over the 7-year period, 1954–61, would have been about 1.9 percent. Actually no complete population count has ever been made in Nepal, and all population estimates must be taken as subject to an unknown degree of error. The preliminary report, however, represents the latest and best information available, and its figures are generally consistent with other recent estimates for various regions.

The average population density as calculated from the 1961 census was about 180 per square mile (table 1). Comparative figures in 1961 were 259 for Pakistan, 347 for India and 82 for Burma. The lowest density was in the Far Western Mountain Region, where it was estimated to be approximately 94 per square mile. The highest density, given as 2,163, was in the Katmandu Valley, where 3 of the country's 4 largest towns are situated. The density in the rural section of the valley is also high—about 1,150 per square mile. In general the heaviest concentrations outside the valley are found in areas endowed with fertile soil and adequate rainfall, as in the Eastern Tarai Region, where the average density reportedly is 434 per square mile. These advantages may be offset in some areas, however, by other unfavorable factors, as in the fertile but malarial and pest-ridden Center Inner Tarai Region.

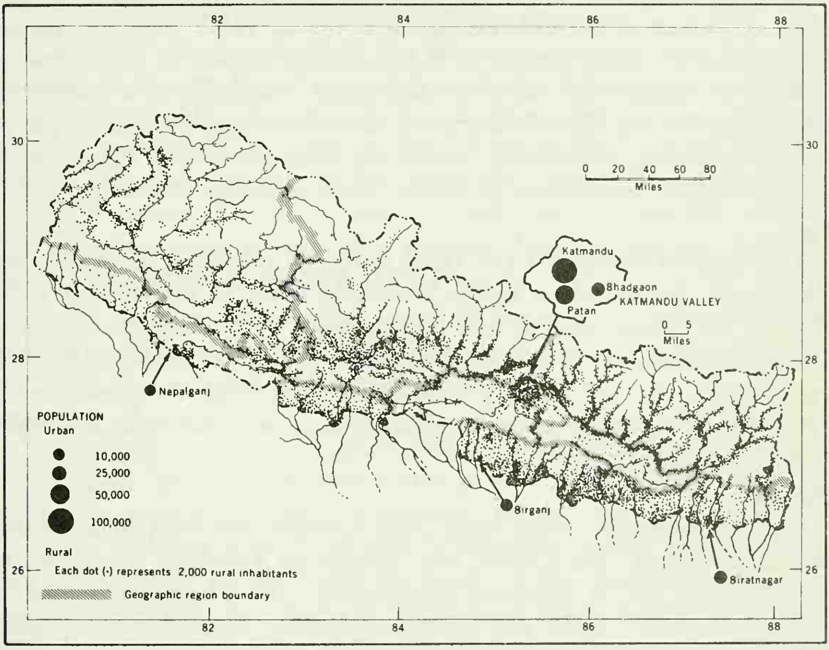
Table 1. Areas, Population and Average Population Densities of Geographic Regions in Nepal, 1961

Geographic region	Area	Population	Average density
	(in square miles)		*(per square mile)*
Eastern Mountains	10,114	1,976,744	195
Western Mountains	11,076	2,113,043	190
Far Western Mountains	18,879	1,774,515	94
Katmandu Valley	218	471,447	2,163
The Tarai:			
Eastern	5,115	2,222,113	434
Eastern Inner	1,829	180,083	98
Center Inner	2,276	244,506	107
Western	1,307	402,271	308
Midwestern	714	99,432	139
Far Western	2,843	272,236	96
Total Tarai	(14,084)	(3,420,641)	(243)
Total	54,371	9,756,390	180

Source: Adapted from Nepal, Central Statistical Bureau, *Preliminary Report—Population Census, 1961.* (Trans. by Royal Nepalese Embassy.) Katmandu: 1962, pp. 2–14.

Since only about 10 percent of the total land area is cultivated, average density for the country as a whole is less significant than average density per cultivated square mile, which is approximately 1,500 (see ch. 17, Agriculture). Extraordinarily high concentrations are crowded onto the slopes of many of the narrow, fertile stream valleys (see fig. 6).

The 1961 census lists 147,715 more females than males in the total population, or 103 females for every 100 males. Statistics on age distribution and birth and death rates are not available, but estimates based on the 1952–54 census indicate that about 39 percent of the total population is under the age of 15, and 59 percent is between the ages of 15 and 59. The 1952–54 census statistics also show the excess of females over males to be greatest in the Eastern Mountain Region, where reportedly there were 107 females for every 100 males, while in the Far Western Tarai statistics showed only 91 females for every 100 males. It is explained in the 1952–54 census report that the reason for this disparity in the Eastern Mountains was that many men left the area for 6 months or more every year to seek employment or engage in trade. The imbalance in the Far Western Tarai, on the other hand, is attributed to the allegedly greater care given to male than to female infants in this region.



82
84
86
88
30
28
26
0 20 40 60 80
Miles
Katmandu
Bhadgaon
Patan
KATMANDU VALLEY
0 5
Miles
Nepalganj
Birganj
Biratnagar
POPULATION
Urban
10,000
25,000
50,000
100,000
Rural
Each dot (·) represents 2,000 rural inhabitants
Geographic region boundary

Source: Adapted from Pradyumna P. Karan and William M. Jenkins, *Nepal: A Cultural and Physical Geography*, p. 50.

Figure 6. General Distribution of Population in Nepal by Geographic Areas (1952–54 Census).

Settlement Patterns

Almost all Nepalese live in villages or in small market towns. According to the 1961 census there were only 264,038 urban dwellers, or less than 3 percent of the total population. Based on official estimates of approximately 29,120 villages in the country, average village size would be about 335 inhabitants. The size and types of rural settlements vary widely, however, since they are determined largely by the availability of space, configuration of the terrain and fertility of the soil. In the fertile Tarai plains, many villages have 500 or more houses, whereas on the precipitous slopes of the hills and on the rocky slopes of the mountains most settlements probably do not comprise more than 25 dwellings (see ch. 4, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

Ethnic and local distinctiveness make it difficult to generalize, but at least three settlement types are present—compact, dispersed and clustered. Compact settlements predominate in the Tarai plains; dispersed settlements are found mainly in the mountain regions at elevations up to 9,000 or 10,000 feet; clustered settlements, consisting of a number of house clusters, are limited largely to the narrow valleys and gorges at elevations above 10,000 feet, along the boundary with Tibet. Some clustered types also appear in limited areas at lower altitudes.

Tarai

The compact villages of the Tarai lowlands, inhabited mostly by the Tharu and Indian ethnic groups, resemble those of neighboring India (see ch. 4, Ethnic Groups and Languages). The houses are usually rectangular, one story in height, and with rather steeply pitched, thatched gable roofs. The walls are of wattle (woven of twigs or coarse grass), but the dwellings of prosperous villagers may have tile roofs and walls of mud mixed with straw.

Mountain

In the mountains, house types vary considerably with local setting and ethnic group. The Limbu, who inhabit the area near the boundary with Sikkim, live in dispersed settlements. Their houses regarded as the best in rural Nepal, are wooden, two-story structures, the ground floors being used for storerooms and the second floors for living quarters. The gable roofs usually are of thatch, and thatch-covered verandas open off the living rooms. The walls are usually decorated with elaborate carvings and painted in bright colors.

The Tamang villages, north and west of Katmandu Valley, are built in compact clusters usually situated in the central part of a terraced slope, convenient to the cultivated plots. The houses are usually of two stories, with wide-angled gables paralleling the terrace walls.

The Gurung, on the south flank of Annapurna, at elevations around 10,000 feet, live in loosely clustered villages composed of neatly constructed rectangular houses of two stories. The walls are of dry stone; the gable roofs of slate. Farther south in the Pokhara area the Gurung villages are composed of elliptical or oval dwellings with neatly whitewashed walls and conical roofs covered with thatch or slate. Some houses have roofed verandas on the south side.

The Magar, on the western and southern flanks of the Dhaulagiri massif, also live in clustered villages. Their houses are extraordinarily large, with two stories and flat or hipped roofs.

The Sherpa, in the high mountains west of Mount Everest, live in dispersed villages which contrast with the clustered settlements of most of the other groups farther west in the Tibetan border region. Sherpa houses are usually two-story structures with white, plastered walls and low, pitched, gable roofs covered with slate shingles or wooden planks. The ground floor is used to shelter farm tools, and the family lives above in one large room with the hearth in a corner.

The Bhote villages, north of the Annapurna massif, are frequently situated on or near the alluvial fans of glacier-fed streams which provide a dependable water supply for irrigating the terraced cropland. Perched on shelves on sides of deep canyons, the villages typically consist of a tight cluster of tall stone and mortar houses. Adjacent dwellings frequently have a common wall, and the general effect of the village complex is that of a fortress. Families use the flat roofs to take advantage of sunlight during the day.

In the extreme northwestern part of the country, villages consist of clusters of houses built of stone or wood slabs. The flat roofs are reached by outside ladders instead of stairs.

Urban

The country's only towns are situated in the Katmandu Valley and in the Tarai. In the Katmandu Valley they were built originally as the capitals of local kingdoms. For security reasons they were surrounded by walls enclosing a group of tightly clustered houses, with centrally located pagodas. In the Tarai the larger towns developed from commercial centers at the termini of railroads or roads leading to the area from India. Most of them retain the appearance of overgrown villages centered around a marketplace, and perhaps a few government buildings and a business section.

Mobility

Notwithstanding the terrain and the fact that travel in much of the country is over narrow and precipitous trails, many Nepalese are on the move during the dry season. Some work as porters; others trek to markets to sell their produce or seek employment; and still others go on pilgrimages. Statistics are not available on interregional movement, hence estimates and conclusions on the subject are based on fragmentary observations and general impressions.

In some areas of central Nepal the inhabitants of certain communities live in twin villages: one, usually in a valley bottom, is occupied in the winter and early summer months; the other, at a higher altitude, is used during the late summer and early fall by all or part of the villagers, who take their animals to the higher pastures. Some villagers may plant crops on the south slope early in the season and then move over the ridge to their twin village on the north slope to plant another crop to be harvested later in the season (see ch. 17, Agriculture).

Traders are constantly on the move between market towns in India and areas throughout the country. Others reportedly travel through the passes on the boundary with Tibet (see ch. 19, Industry and Trade). Many Magar living in areas south and west of the Dhaulagiri massif are said to migrate each winter to the Tarai, where they make bamboo mats, baskets and other articles to sell in market towns along the Indian border.

The British and Indian Armies continue to attract numerous Nepalese volunteers: these men, accepted only from the mountain regions, account for a certain amount of the going and coming across the Indian frontier. Still others are attracted to India for long or short periods by employment opportunities.

The 1961 census indicates that approximately 369,000 persons—almost 4 percent of the population—were away from home when the census was taken. Of this number, about 85 percent were reported to be outside the country. According to comparable statistics in the 1952–54 census, almost 80 percent of those living abroad were in India; the remainder were mostly in Malaya and Burma. About two-thirds of the absentees were from the mountain regions; the smallest proportion of absentees were from the Tarai.

MAJOR TOWNS

Katmandu

Katmandu, centrally situated in the valley of the same name, is the historic capital of the kingdom. With a population of approximately 122,500, comprising about 20,500 families, it is by far the largest town in the country. Its nucleus is the old place surrounded by numerous Buddhist shrines and by many elaborately constructed Hindu temples with ornate images of animals such as bulls and elephants. Contributing to its religious importance is Katmandu's position astride the Baghmati Nadi, a sacred stream. In the northeast section of town the Baghmati curves around a hill surmounted by a large Hindu temple which is regarded as the holiest in the land.

Expansion has been mostly to the east along the 3-mile road leading to Gauchar Airport. The residential section on the east edge of town is known as Delhi Bazar. Adjacent to the old part of Katmandu is the newer business section. Its four- or five-story red brick buildings contain retail shops on the ground floors and living quarters above. Most of them are decorated with elaborately carved latticework on the balconies and around the windows. Just southeast of the old section is the Singha

Durbar, once the chief palace of the Rana rulers and now a maze of government offices. To the north is a wide, tree-lined avenue called the King's Way, along which are several large palaces and a foreign embassy, most of them with their own gardens. This section includes the Royal Palace (Narayan Hiti), as well as the homes of a few wealthy Ranas.

Patan

Patan (Lalitpur in Sanskrit) is situated 3 miles southeast of the center of Katmandu. With a population of approximately 48,800, comprising about 8,500 families, it is the second largest urban center in Nepal. The main entrance into town is through a gate in the ancient wall, sections of which are still standing. Temples crowd its central square and no factories or modern business establishments alter its medieval appearance. A handicraft center, Patan is known especially for weaving and metalwork. Buildings are typically of four or five stories, with walls of red brick; windows and doors are trimmed with carved wood, usually painted black. Most of these structures stand wall to wall around square compounds, each about the size of a small city block. Several compounds may be connected by arched passages, the complex including a large temple. Each compound is usually occupied by a separate clan. Buildings in certain parts of the town are provided with individual wells, but in the poorer sections families obtain water from common wells or from pipe-fed tanks. The streets are of cobblestones, and most are too narrow for transport vehicles.

Biratnagar

Biratnagar, the most important industrial center in the country and the principal commercial town in the Eastern Tarai, is situated about 6 miles from Jogbani, an Indian railroad terminus on the Nepalese border. With a population of approximately 33,300, or about 6,670 families, it ranks third in size in the country. The business area, known as the bazaar, is surrounded by residential sections, which are interspersed with retail shops and small industrial enterprises. The town's economy is sustained largely by trade with India.

Bhadgaon

Bhadgaon (Bhaktapur in Sanskrit) is situated 8 miles east of Katmandu, with which it is connected by a 2-lane macadam road. Its population of approximately 33,000—some 6,130 families—makes it the fourth largest town in Nepal. It is built around an open area called Durbar Square, which is in front of the historic royal palace of the Malla kings. Bhadgaon's ancient temples and shrines and its many religious festivals attract visitors from all over Nepal and northern India.

Nepalganj

Nepalganj is situated in Far Western Tarai about 4 miles from an Indian railroad branch line terminus on the Nepalese border. With a reported population of approximately 15,800, or about 3,300 families, it is the largest town in western Nepal. Its importance as a trading center is enhanced by road connections with Nepalese border villages to the west, by a trail leading northward to Tibet and by a nearby airfield.

Birganj

Birganj is a market town about 55 miles southwest of Katmandu, opposite the Indian border town of Raxaul, which is one of the terminal points of the narrow-gauge (30-inch) Royal Nepal Government Railway and is also served by a spur of the meter-gauge Indian North-Eastern Railway. The former runs northward about 30 miles to Amlekhganj, where cargo can be transferred to the ropeway leading to Katmandu.

Birganj has a population of some 10,800, or about 1,800 families. The people dress in Indian fashion and Hindi is the common language. The town's importance will probably increase because a sugar factory is being built there with Soviet aid. The Tilawe Nadi irrigation dam, sponsored by United States aid, is underway about 10 miles to the north, and a road, paralleling the railroad to Amlekhganj, is also being reconstructed and improved with both United States and Indian aid. There is an airfield at Simra, near the railroad terminus.

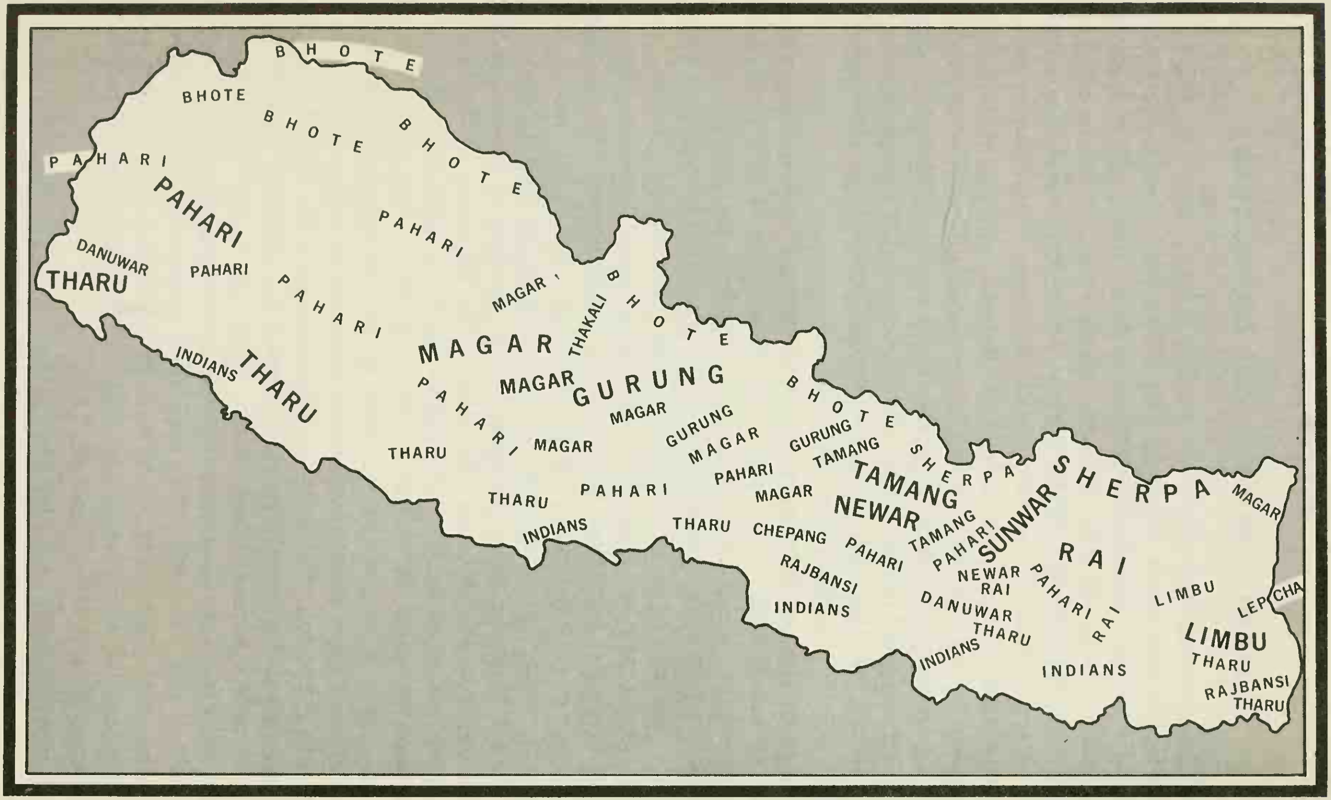
CHAPTER 4

ETHNIC GROUPS AND LANGUAGES

Settled in ancient times by peoples from India to the south and west and Tibet to the north and east, Nepal has been more or less continuously subject to cultural influences from these two centers of civilization. It has in turn influenced them. Thus, Tibet received its script from Nepal in the Malla period. From Nepal also the pagoda style of architecture spread throughout the East. The country's population is ethnically complex, ranging in physical type and culture from the Indian to the Tibetan. Except for the sizable population of Indian birth or ancestry concentrated in the Tarai on the border with India and a few thousand refugees from Chinese-Communist-dominated Tibet, all of the varied ethnic groups into which the Nepalese are divided have evolved distinctive patterns of their own.

The north Indian antecedents of a number of caste groups which make up nearly half of the total population are evident in their language, religion, social organization and physical appearance, but all of these features have been modified in the Nepalese environment. These groups—several castes of Brahmans, the high-ranking Thakuri and Chetri castes and an untouchable category—have been classified as Pahari (Parbate) from their historic north Indian connections, although the term has only a limited use in Nepal and the Pahari groups are known by their individual caste names. Nepali, the native tongue of the Pahari (and the official language of the country), is closely related to but by no means identical with Hindi. The Hinduism of the Pahari has been influenced both by Buddhism and by indigenous folk belief. The caste system of the Pahari is neither as elaborately graded nor as all embracing in its sanctions as that of the Indians; and physically many of the Pahari show the results of intermixture with the Mongoloid peoples of the region. Similarly, the Bhote groups of the high Himalayas —among whom the mountaineering Sherpa have attracted the attention of the outside world—although clearly related physically and culturally to the Tibetans, have developed regional distinctions among themselves. "Bhote" is also a generic term, applied to persons of Tibetan culture and Mongoloid physical type. As used by the Pahari and the Newar it has a pejorative connotation and may be applied to any non-Hindu of Mongoloid appearance (see fig. 7).

An extraordinarily complex terrain has contributed to the human complexity. The deeply cut valleys and high ridges of the Himalayan massif, in which the northern three-fourths of the country lies, have tended to divide the various ethnic populations themselves into many


BHOTE
BHOTE
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PAHARI
PAHARI
PAHARI
DANUWAR
THARU
PAHARI
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MAGAR
THAKALI
BHOTE
MAGAR
INDIANS
THARU
MAGAR
GURUNG
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NEWAR
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THARU
CHEPANG
PAHARI
TAMANG
PAHARI
SUNWAR
RAI
RAJBANSI
NEWAR
RAI
PAHARI
LIMBU
LEPCHA
INDIANS
DANUWAR
THARU
RAI
LIMBU
INDIANS
INDIANS
THARU
RAJBANSI
THARU

Figure 7. Distribution of Ethnic Groups in Nepal.

small, isolated and relatively self-sufficient communities. Travel is still largely over footpaths following the generally north to south meanderings of the principal river systems. East and west movement, except in the lowlands of the Tarai, is made difficult by the prevailing direction of the mountain ridges. The regionalizing effect of the terrain is apparent in the predominantly Indian character of the Tarai, which is an extension of the Gangetic Plain; in the clustering of Tibetan-related languages and local cultures in the northern and eastern part of the country and of Indian-derived patterns in the west and south; and in the historic distinctiveness and relative isolation of the central valley enclave of Katmandu. Finally, the nature of the landscape has led to a vertical as well as a lateral sorting of the population, with most of the ethnic groups characteristically being found at particular altitudes. Subsistence pattern is evidently the determining factor, and the distribution ranges from the Indians of the Tarai, who cultivate irrigated rice on the Gangetic Plain, to the Sherpa, whose dry fields and pastures are often at 10,000 feet and above.

Historical origin and continued linguistic and cultural connections make it possible to classify most ethnic groups into two categories: Indo-Nepalese and Tibeto-Nepalese. The Indo-Nepalese category, which includes the Pahari, the Indians of the Tarai, the Newar and the Tharu, comprises perhaps 7.8 million persons, or nearly 80 percent of the total population. Of these four Indo-Nepalese groups, the Pahari was by far the largest, numbering more than 4 million in 1954, according to the last ethnic census data available. Although found throughout the country, the bulk of the Indo-Nepalese population is located in the Tarai and the Katmandu Valley. Most of the principal Tibeto-Nepalese groups—the Tamang, Rai, Limbu, Bhote and Sunwar—live in the north and east, although the Magar and Gurung are found in west-central Nepal. Only three, the Tamang, Magar and Rai, exceeded 200,000 persons in 1954, whereas the Sunwar numbered about 17,000. It seems probable, however, that the peoples on the northern rim of the country—the Bhote, in particular—were underestimated in the 1952–54 census, no actual count having been made in that area.

It is the Tibeto-Nepalese groups—particularly the Magar, Gurung and Rai—who have supplied the bulk of the famous Gurkha contingents to the British and Indian armies, although their ranks have been augmented from the Thakuri and Chetri castes of the Indo-Nepalese Pahari. Not an ethnic designation, the term "Gurkha" derives from the name of the former Kingdom of Gorkha, west of the Katmandu Valley (see ch. 2, Historical Setting; ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

The royal house of Nepal is Thakuri, and the Chetri caste supplied the Rana line of hereditary prime ministers who ruled the country for a hundred years until 1951, when the royal authority was restored.

Nearly half of the estimated 480,000 inhabitants of the Katmandu Valley in 1963 were Pahari, and a large proportion of the wealthiest, best educated and politically most influential persons in the country came from the highest castes of this group. Most of the other half of the population of the Katmandu Valley consisted of the Newar. Known today for their business acumen and handicraft skills, the Newar developed a high degree of civilization in the Valley long before the Pahari conquest in the eighteenth century. They are interesting as a people of Mongoloid-North Indian ancestry, Tibetan-related speech, and mixed Buddhist-Hindu religious orientation, whose Hinduization over the centuries places them with the Pahari in the Indo-Nepalese category (see table 2).

Table 2. Principal Ethnic Groups of Nepal, 1952–54

Ethnic groups	Size
Pahari (also called Kha, Khasa, Khasiya, Khosh, Parbate, Parbatiya.	4,014,000
Indians of the Tarai (various caste groups of northern India)	1,956,700
Tamang (also called Murmi, Lama, Dhamang)	494,800
Newar	383,200
Tharu	359,600
Magar (also called Mangar, Tshong)	273,800
Rai (also called Jimdar, Kiranti, Kirat, Kirata)[1]	246,300
Gurung (also called Tshong)	162,200
Limbu (also called Yakthumba, Subbha, Kirat, Kirata, Kiranti, Tshong)[1]	151,200
Bhote (also called Bhotea, Bhotia, Bhotiya)[2]	73,500
Sunwar (also called Sunuwar)	17,300
Other groups, including Rajbansi, Satar, Chepang, Danuwar, Majhi, Jhangar Kumkale, Darai, Jirel, Byansi, Raji and others[3]	102,900
Total	8,235,500

[1] The Rai, Limbu, Thami and Dhimal groups all speak languages classed as Kiranti. The smaller Thami and Dhimal groups have been added to the larger Rai and Limbu groups, respectively.

[2] The Bhote groups include the well-known Sherpa and the smaller Thakali group.

[3] Although most of these groups are found primarily in the Tarai Regions, several of them (Danuwar, Majhi, Jirel, Byansi and Darai) live mainly or in considerable numbers in the mountain regions of eastern Nepal. The Darai and the Byansi, on the other hand, are found in the Western Mountain Region, probably in areas bordering on the Tarai.

Source: Adapted from Nepal, Department of Statistics, *Census of Population, Nepal, 1952/54 A.D.*, table 10.

Although many members of the Tibeto-Nepalese groups, especially among the Gurung, Magar and Rai, have adopted Hindu religious beliefs and practices, these peoples remain basically Buddhist. A sizable and growing percentage of the Tibeto-Nepalese groups reportedly can speak Nepali, and probably a majority of them have some knowledge of the language. Slowly and unevenly these peoples are being drawn into a national framework of thought and activity by the development of public education, the extension of trade and the operation of the *panchayat* system. There are no signs, however, that basic ethnic identities are disappearing, and all of these peoples preserve their Tibeto-Burman languages and dialects and their traditional culture. None, as a group at least, has adopted the Hindu caste system, although the dominant Pahari and Newar tend to regard the Tibeto-Nepalese groups as so many unitary castes and to rank them below themselves.

Most of the languages spoken in the country belong either to the Indo-European family, represented in India by Hindi among others, or to the Tibeto-Burman family, of which Tibetan is a member. The speakers of the Nepalese languages of these two families, except for the Newar, fall into the Indo-Nepalese and the Tibeto-Nepalese ethnic categories, respectively. A third speech family, the Austro-Asiatic of India, is also thought to be represented by the languages of several Indo-Nepalese groups. Local isolation has produced marked dialect differences within particular languages and, within a given ethnic group, speech may vary widely from one area to another.

Nepali, with a number of related Indian languages, had historical connections with Sanskrit. It is the mother tongue of the numerically and politically dominant Pahari and the official language of the nation. Its use by the Pahari makes it the first language of about half of the total population, and the estimated 13 percent in other groups throughout the country who had some knowledge of it in 1954 has undoubtedly increased. This trend will continue with the growth of the public school system, in which Nepali is the basic medium of instruction. Moreover, there appears to have been some tendency for non-Pahari communities in predominantly Pahari areas to abandon their own speech for Pahari, as appears to be the case with the Magar. The Newar of the Katmandu Valley, however, provide an example of a group which determinedly has preserved its own language though it has accepted Nepali for use in the community at large. It seems probable that a similar pattern will prevail among the other principal non-Pahari groups for the indefinite future.

LANGUAGES

The census of 1952–54 listed 30 languages and dialects and 5 regional groups of local dialects. Of the total, however, about 20 languages were spoken by fewer than 1,000 persons each. Three great language families are thought to be represented in the country: Indo-European, Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic. Little research has been done on the indigenous languages, however, and classification of many of them remains tentative (see table 3).

The most widely spoken languages belong to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European family. They include Eastern Pahari, or Nepali, five regional groupings of local dialects found in the Tarai, and five languages spoken by the Indians of the Tarai: Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, Bhojpuri and Maithili. While all of these languages are related to each other, they are not all mutually intelligible. The Tibeto-Burman languages include Magar, Gurung, Rai, Limbu, Sunwar, Tamang, Newari and a number of Bhote dialects, including Sherpa and Thakali. Dhimal, Hayu and Thami appear to be closely related to Limbu and Rai, but some authorities suggest connections with the Munda branch of the Austro-Asiatic family. Munda languages are spoken mainly in the tribal areas of the Indian States of Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. In Nepal, these languages are thought to include Chepang, Danuwar, Darai, Kumkale, Jirel and Jhangar, spoken mainly by small groups in the Tarai.

Table 3. Languages of Nepal by Percentage of the National Population, 1952–54

Language	Percent[1]	Language	Percent[1]
Nepali	48.7	Far Western Tarai dialects [2]	0.8
Maithili Pradesh dialects [2]	7.5	Rajbansi (Tajpori)	0.4
Tamang	6.0	Urdu	0.4
Eastern Tarai dialects [2]	5.6	Sunwar	0.2
Newari	4.7	Satar	0.2
Tharuhati	4.4	Bhojpuri	0.2
Maithili	3.7	Chepang	0.2
Magar	3.3	Thami	0.1
Midwestern Tarai dialects [2]	3.1	Bengali	0.1
Rai	2.9	Danuwar	0.1
Gurung	2.0	Other languages, including Majhi, Dhimal, Jhangar, Kumkale, Thakali, Darai, Jirel, Byansi, Raji and Majwari	0.5
Limbu	1.8		
Morang Pradesh dialects [2]	1.3		
Hindi	1.0		
Bhote (including Sherpa and Thakali)	0.9		

[1] Figures do not total because of rounding.

[2] The dialects were not further identified by the census, as the respondents merely identified their form of speech as "the local language," and hence the dialects were simply grouped by the region in which they were spoken.

Source: Adapted from Nepal, Department of Statistics, *Census of Population, Nepal, 1952/54 A.D.*, table 11.

The languages of the north and east belong predominantly to the Tibeto-Burman family. Aside from the speculative Munda connection, the Kiranti languages of eastern Nepal—Limbu, Rai, Dhimal, Thami and Hayu—which seem to be related to the Lepcha language of Sikkim, are generally considered to be Tibeto-Burman. Newari likewise is commonly placed in the Tibeto-Burman family, but some authorities suggest that it may be derived from an early language of India which subsequently was influenced by both Tibeto-Burman and Indo-European languages.

The south and west are areas of Indo-European speech. A few Austro-Asiatic enclaves, with tentative connections with languages of this family in India, are present but the number of speakers is small. Nepali is the dominant language of the Western Mountain, the Eastern Mountain and the Eastern Inner Tarai Regions. Many people in the Katmandu Valley and in both of the Inner Tarai Regions also speak it. Only in the Tarai itself does it occupy a relatively minor position as a first language. In the Western Inner Tarai and Far Western Tarai Regions more than half of the people speak Tharuhati, the Hindi-influenced language of the Tharu. Newari is the native tongue of more than half of the population of the Katmandu Valley. In the Eastern and Midwestern Tarai Regions a number of Indian languages and dialects are spoken, none clearly overshadowing the others.

The Pahari dialects, of which Nepali is one, fall into three main divisions, Eastern, Central and Western. Eastern Pahari, officially known as Nepali, is also called Parbatiya-bhasha (language of the mountain people), Khaskura (language of the Kha), or Gurkhali or Gorkhali (from the ancient Kingdom of Gorkha). Western Pahari is represented by a number of local dialects in Kashmir. Central Pahari is found in the Far Western Region of Nepal, but it centers in the mountain areas of Uttar Pradesh in India. Eastern Pahari differs from Central and Western Pahari mainly in having been more strongly influenced by Tibeto-Burman languages. Nepali, or Eastern Pahari, is reported to have three main subdialects, but detailed information about them is lacking.

Although the principal languages are centered in particular regions, speakers of most of them may be encountered in various parts of the country, especially in the larger towns. Nepali, long before it acquired its status as the official national language, was employed as a lingua franca by members of the different speech communities in their dealings with each other, and the knowledge of it is spreading. There are indications that in some ethnic communities it is actually displacing other languages.

Of the indigenous languages, only Pahari and Newari have developed a literature of their own, both using scripts derived from Sanskrit. The Limbu have a script, which they reportedly are trying to revive after a long period of disuse. A Limbu chronicle and other works in this script are said to have been destroyed during the Pahari conquest, and none have since come to light. Most of the people in the north are adherents of Buddhism of the Tibetan type, and many have some knowledge of the Buddhist scriptures in Tibetan.

ETHNIC GROUPS

A number of small Pahari kingdoms, or principalities, appear to have been established in the valleys of western Nepal before the third century. Much earlier, however, a Tibeto-Burman-speaking people, the Kirata, had settled in the Katmandu Valley. Their origin and history are unclear. According to one hypothesis, they were displaced in the Katmandu Valley in the sixth century by another Tibeto-Burman-speaking group, the Newar. Some authorities place the arrival of the Newar—whose origins are no less problematical than those of the Kirata—centuries later. In any event the early inhabitants of the Valley came to be called Newar. By the beginning of the Christian era the Newar, who had adopted Buddhism, had developed an advanced civilization. Thereafter, political power passed to a succession of Indian rulers who progressively Hinduized the Valley. The Newar adopted the caste system of their conquerors, but they retained their language and preserved their cultural identity in a synthesis of Hinduism and their earlier Buddhist belief. In the course of this development the Katmandu Valley was more or less continuously in contact with the centers of Indian civilzation to the south, but a period of vassalage to Tibet exposed it to cultural influences from that quarter as well (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

Outside the Katmandu Valley the complex Nepalese terrain was contributing to the ethnic complexity of a slowly growing population of varied origins. The Tarai, as a part of the Gangetic Plain, presented no obstacles to the entry of Indians seeking new land, and it became virtually a cultural extension of India. To the west, the advancing Pahari gradually established themselves in the lower and more fertile valleys, leaving the high, northern fringe to scattered groups of Tibeto-Burman-speaking Bhote peoples. Finally penetrating central Nepal, some of the Pahari were drawn into the comparatively urban complex of Katmandu. In the central region they also met and mingled or fought with groups whose Tibeto-Burman speech and Mongoloid physical type suggest ancient connections with the peoples of the Asian mountain lands to the north and east. These peoples predominated in the east and north and, in contrast to the Hindu-Indian affiliations of the Pahari, their closest connections were with the cultures of Tibet and the sub-Himalayan areas to the east. The basic pattern of ethnic distribution which emerged from this history of migration, conquest and settlement—an Indo-Nepalese west and south and a Tibeto-Nepalese north and east—still persists, although it is increasingly being complicated by continued movement and mingling of the population (see table 4).

Indo-Nepalese

The larger Indo-Nepalese groups—the Pahari, the Newar and the Indians of the Tarai—are organized into hereditary castes. Associated with particular occupations and ordered in a hierarchy of ritual purity

Table 4. Regional Distribution of Principal Ethnic and Linguistic Groups of Nepal, 1952–54

Ethnic groups	Mountains		Tarai						Katmandu Valley
	Eastern	Western[1]	Eastern Inner	Eastern	Center Inner	Midwestern	Western	Far Western	
Pahari	876,500	2,653,500	105,100	79,000	161,300	32,600	7,000	7,700	161,300
Newari	76,500	54,000	3,500	8,100	12,600	......	1,600	1,000	225,800
Tharu	......	27,600	10,400	24,500	28,000	50,800	68,500	149,900	......
Indians[2]	500	7,100	2,500	1,592,900	700	5,600	270,100	75,200	2,100
Tamang	240,000	112,400	27,300	16,400	79,400	......	......	......	19,200
Magar	50,800	181,600	22,000	13,000	4,800	100	600	......	800
Rai[3]	231,200	......	13,200	2,700	......	100	......	......	100
Gurung	9,100	149,600	......	200	2,500	......	200	......	500
Sunwar	16,300	......	1,000	100	......	......	......	......	......
Limbu[4]	144,400	......	......	6,200	......	......	......	......	100
Bhote	52,300	20,900	......	......	......	......	......	......	300
Other Groups[5]	10,700	4,700	4,100	60,400	20,700	200	200	1,200	700

[1] The Western Mountain Region of the 1952-54 census included the two census regions—Western Mountain and Far Western Mountain—of the 1961 Census of Population.

[2] Includes a large number of castes speaking a wide variety of Indian languages and dialects.

[3] Includes 10,200 Thami found in the Eastern Mountain and Eastern Inner Tarai Regions. (About 200 in Eastern Inner Tarai.)

[4] Includes 5,700 Dhimal found in the Eastern Tarai Region.

[5] Includes approximately 30 small groups of which little is known. The largest group comprises the 35,000 Rajbansi of the Eastern Tarai Region.

Source: Adapted from Nepal, Department of Statistics, *Census of Population, Nepal, 1952/54 A.D.*, table 10.

and social prestige, they range from the priestly Brahmans and the warrior Kshatriyas at the top to the untouchables at the bottom. Caste obligations and privileges and the regulations designed to protect high caste individuals from ritual defilement by contact with members of the lower castes are based on the Vedic *dharmashastras* and other Hindu religious texts. Until 1963 this body of customary rules was sanctioned by the legal code (Mulki Ain) of the kingdom. In that year, however, a new code came into effect which prohibited all legal discrimination on the basis of caste, abolished the laws sanctioning untouchability, and permitted intercaste marriages. These provisions, which were drafted at the behest of the King, were aimed, not at the abolition of the caste system by fiat, but at the promotion of social harmony by making all Nepalese subjects equal before the law.

Caste in Nepal has been neither as universal in its extension nor as comprehensive in its sanction as in India, where it originated. Undoubtedly, many of the attitudes, values and patterned relationships implicit in the caste system will persist in large segments of the population. Caste, however, can be expected in the course of time to lose its traditional mandatory force in the regulation of group and personal behavior.

Caste membership is acquired by birth and in theory cannot be changed. People ideally marry only within their caste, but men may marry women of lower caste, provided the difference is not great. These marriages usually are not conducted with full religious ceremonies, and the offspring of such unions generally have lower status than the father.

In the Hindu system in India, castes (*jati* in Hindi; *jatiya* in Nepali) are grouped into five broad categories. Four of these categories in descending order of rank are the ritually clean *varna* (in Sanskrit, literally color or sort) of Brahmans, or priests; Kshatriya, or nobles; Vaishya, or merchants and farmers; and Shudra, or artisans and laborers. The fifth category comprises the ritually unclean *achut*, or untouchables. The four *varna* and the untouchable group are divided into thousands of castes and subcastes. In contrast to these five categories, however, which are represented throughout the subcontinent, the castes are essentially regional groups of persons whose shared indentity is based not only on ritual status, occupational specialization and caste name, but often on a claim of descent from a remote common ancestor. Castes tend to fragment into local subcastes in which marriage within the group adds the uniting force of actual kin ties.

The castes within each of the four *varna* tend to be ranked among themselves on a scale of ritual purity. Such ranking appears to vary locally, and a given caste may have higher or lower status in different places relative to others in its *varna*. Such refinements of grading develop in the interaction of the castes in a particular area, and they reflect social, economic and political differences in the circumstances of the castes of the same *varna* in different localities.

The untouchables have traditionally engaged in occupations associated with filth, blood and death. Ranked below all the other castes, they are considered to be outside the *varna* system and are sometimes called "outcastes." They are organized into ranked castes, but from the viewpoint of the members of the four clean *varna*, they are all unclean.

In Nepal the traditional Hindu scheme of four *varna* and an untouchable category is fully realized only among the Newar and the Indians of the Tarai. By contrast, only the two highest *varna*—Brahman and Kshatriya—and the untouchables are present among the Pahari. Moreover, the social practices surrounding untouchability are generally milder than has been traditional in India—especially in South India, where in some localities untouchables have been forbidden to come within a certain distance of high-caste persons.

Since castes do not function independently but only in relation to other castes in a scheme of ritual and occupational interdependence, the castes in each local area constitute a more or less autonomous system. A rural Pahari community, for example, may include various castes of Brahmans, Kshatriya and untouchables. Depending upon their caste, the Brahmans appear both as priests and landlords and as peasant farmers. The Kshatriya castes include landlords, landowning farmers and tenant cultivators. Blacksmithing, carpentry, barbering, farm labor, scavenging and other tasks traditionally regarded as menial or defiling are performed by the various untouchable castes.

Pahari

The Pahari, or Parbate (literally, "people of the mountains"), are predominantly North Indian in physical type with some increment or Mongoloid traits derived from mixture with such groups as the Magar and Gurung. They are divided into the high "clean" or "twice-born" castes (Khasiya) and the low "unclean" or "polluting" castes (Dom). The Khasiya castes comprise the Brahman or Kshatriya *varna*. The term "Khasiya" or "Kha," however, often refers restrictively to the high castes of the hills, most of whom are of the Kshatriya *varna*. The Brahmans have three castes: Upadhyaya, Kumai and Jaisi; the Kshatriya have four: Thakur, Chetri, Khatri and Hamal. The Jaisi are peasant farmers and, unlike the Upadhyaya and Kumai Brahmans, perform only limited priestly functions; some engage in astrology and fortunetelling. The untouchable Dom group includes such occupational castes as Sarkhi (leatherworkers), Kami (metalworkers), Damai (tailors and musicians), Hurkiya (drummers), Kusule (sweepers and musicians) and Sunar (goldsmiths). The Nepalese Pahari received influxes of high-caste refugees from India during the Moslem invasions of North India (eleventh through sixteenth centuries), and following the conquest of the Newar kingdoms of the Katmandu Valley were in close contact with the important urban centers of North India. It is highly probable, therefore, that the traditions of the Pahari living in and around Katmandu Valley are more comparable to the customs of Indians living on the Gangetic Plain than are those of their rural counterparts in western Nepal.

The majority of the Pahari belong to the Khasiya category. High-caste status in itself does not bring wealth, and most of the Khasiya are small landowning farmers, growing rice, barley, wheat and corn, and raising a few animals. The members of the smaller but still sizable, Dom group support themselves by handicraft skills, menial services and farm labor on the holdings of high-caste farmers. All the castes needed to carry out the work of the rural community are not usually present in a single village but are apt to be distributed in a number of adjacent villages, which become linked by ties of economic, ritual and social interdependence. Such ties tend to be reinforced by the fact that men must normally seek brides from outside their village, since their own local caste group is apt to consist of no more than a few closely related families. Brahmans may take Kshatriya wives and there is some intermarriage across ethnic lines, but the normal pattern is to marry within one's caste and ethnic group.

The Pahari household ideally consists of a man, his wife, their unmarried children and married sons with their wives and children. The adult males of this group own property in common, although the father exercises authority and control over it and over the earnings of all members of the family. This extended family household usually breaks up upon the death of the father, since the eldest brother cannot compel younger brothers to remain if they wish to claim their share of the estate and set up on their own. Brothers sometimes continue to reside together under the leadership and authority of the eldest. In the next generation, however, the family household is dissolved and the joint estate is usually divided among the grandsons of the original head of the family, who then establish their own households.

Women of all castes make an important economic contribution to their families through their activities in agriculture and animal husbandry as well as through their duties in the home, and, in general, their status is somewhat higher than that traditionally accorded women in Hindu India. At marriage the family of the bridegroom bears the expenses of the wedding and formerly gave, and in some areas still gives, an agreed-upon sum in cash to the family of the bride. The bride's family, however, is expected to use the money it receives to pay for entertaining the wedding guests.

In contrast, the Hindu Indian custom is for the bride's family to provide a dowry for the daughter and pay the wedding expenses, and many wealthy Indian Pahari families have adopted this practice. In and around Katmandu the practice of giving a bride-price appears to have been abandoned. A dowry, on the other hand, is usually not demanded from the bride's family, although it generally pays for the expenses of the wedding. In western Nepal the traditional Pahari custom of paying a bride-price probably persists, as it does among the Pahari in the neighboring mountain areas of India. Divorce, authorized by the new Mulki Ain, formerly had no legal sanction. Separated women, as well as widows, however, did form new unions. Among the rural Pahari, the widow who remarried ideally married her dead husband's younger brother.

The "untouchable" Dom castes engage in a range of handicraft and service activities which in most of India would be occupations of the Shudra as well as of the untouchable castes. Among the Pahari the term *"achut"* (untouchable), which the high castes use to refer to the Dom, means that the high-caste person may not accept food or water from the untouchable and that members of the Dom group must not touch utensils and dishes of the high castes or cross the threshold of their houses.

There are a number of other restrictions on the Dom which serve to continually remind them of their ritual impurity and low status, but some status distinctions existing among the Dom are recognized by the high castes. A Kami or a Damai, for example, is considered to be less defiling than a Sarki of a Pore. On the whole, there is a great deal of friendly, informal social intercourse in the villages between high-caste persons and the artisans of the Dom group. The demand for the services of the artisan generally extends beyond his own village, and he is likely to practice skills which theoretically belong to different castes. Each artisan or service caste member usually has a series of high-caste farming families for whom he works, receiving in payment a fixed proportion of the harvest, the exact amount varying with the size of the household or landholding of the farmer and the type of service performed, such as mending plows, butchering animals, playing drums at festivals, tailoring or cleaning. The arrangement is supposed to be a permanent one, but in practice there is a good deal of shifting from one high-caste patron to another. Dom families seldom own farmland, although they usually have the use of some land as tenants to supplement their small earnings from their traditional occupations.

Newar

The Newar, who make up about half the population of the Katmandu Valley, have lived there for perhaps more than 15 centuries. Whatever their ultimate antecedents, which remain problematical, many of them are markedly Mongoloid in physical type, and they retain a language belonging to the Tibeto-Burman family. Although many Newar are farmers, their villages, with masonry dwellings of several stories, have a distinctly urban flavor. Their concentration in the Valley, their relatively high educational level and, since the fall of the Ranas, their economic prosperity are enabling them to play an important role in the civil and political life of the country. For example, the members of the Palace Secretariat since 1951 have been Newar.

Long and intimate contact with Indian civilization, both directly in the Indo-Gangetic Plain and as mediated through the now dominant Pahari, has assimilated them to the Indo-Nepalese category without, however, destroying their cultural distinctiveness. At an early date they accepted Indian Buddhism and, somewhat later, Hinduism, the caste system and Hindu political ideas and organization. Fusing these Indian-derived features with elements of their own, they developed a high civilization with a distinctive literature, style of architecture, religion and decorative art.

The Newar castes, Buddhist as well as Hindu, are no less pollution-conscious than the Pahari and the Indians. Caste endogamy, however, which has been one of the main methods of maintaining status in India, is not strictly observed in Nepal by either the Newar or the Pahari. The strictest rules governing the relations between members of different castes are those pertaining to commensality. Boiled rice and *dal* (a sauce made of lentils), in particular, must not be accepted from a person of lower caste. Other rules further restrict social intercourse between the castes, but they tend to be treated more casually.

Newar caste structure resembles more closely that of north India than that of the Pahari, in that all four *varna* (Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra) and untouchables are represented. There are about 70 Newar, Hindu and Buddhist castes. About 30 of these are reported to be untouchables. Most castes have specific religious duties and functions in the festivals as well as traditional occupational specializations. The division into Hindu and Buddhist castes has not been regarded by the Newar as a serious cleavage, since both groups share the same basic values and social practices and are in close accord in their underlying religious philosophy. Many Newar, in fact, participate in many of the observances of both religions.

The two highest Buddhist castes, the Gubhaju and Bare, which correspond to the Brahman castes of the Hindu section, are composed of the lineages and families descended from Buddhist monks who some centuries ago, under Hindu influence and pressure, dropped the rule of celibacy. The married monastics continued living in religious communities and their descendants are now divided into a number of partly fictive descent groups, each living in a cluster of buildings grouped around a central courtyard, from which they continue to carry out their traditional religious functions for the Buddhist section of the community. A subgroup of the Bare, the Sakya, traditionally engaged in the production of sacred objects and the building and repair of temples, are enjoying prosperity by producing art objects for the tourist trade.

Apparently there are no Kshatriya castes in the Buddhist section, although the Shresta, or Sheshyo, may have held this status at the time when Newar kings ruled the Katmandu Valley. Since the Gurkha conquest, however, the Shresta have been generally considered to belong to the Vaishya *varna*. Although most Shresta think of themselves as Hindus and employ Brahman family priests, there is a sizable group of Buddhist Shresta living in Katmandu as well as smaller groups in other parts of the Valley. Buddhist Shresta who have become wealthy have tended to turn from Buddhist to Brahman priests, although this tendency is perhaps being affected by the recent resurgence of Newar interest in Buddhism reported by some observers. Also in the Vaishya *varna* is the Uda, or Urha, caste—which has traditionally engaged in trade with Tibet, maintaining a small colony in Lhasa and adopting Tibetan religion and customs—and a number of artisan castes—carpenters, bakers, coppersmiths, stonemasons and tilemakers.

At the bottom of the ritually clean category is the Shudra *varna*. It comprises the rural caste of agriculturalists (Jyapu) and a number of artisan groups, such as lime quarriers, cloth dyers, oil pressers, blacksmiths, painters and barbers. Of these artisan castes the barbers have the highest rank and enjoy certain ritual privileges which the others do not have. Below all these are the untouchable occupational castes of butchers, leatherworkers, fishermen, sweepers, charcoalers, drum makers, musicians and washermen.

The highest caste of the Hindu section, the Deo Brahmans, were the family priests of the Malla kings, who reigned in the Valley before the Gurkha conquest. Below them are the Jha Brahmans, who have less important religious functions and do not act as family priests. Traditionally, at least, neither caste married Nepali-speaking Pahari Brahmans.

Below the Brahman *varna* is a large caste of heterogenous origins, the Shresta, which is divided not only into Hindu and Buddhist sections but also into subgroups of different status. These subgroups do not appear to constitute actual subcastes since they intermarry and accept food from each other. Although most Shresta, both Hindu and Buddhist, are commonly held to be Vaishya, some Hindu Shresta clan groups—Malla, Pradhan and Rajbandari—are universally recognized as Kshatriya. These three clans are often considered to constitute a distinct caste, although they continue to eat with and marry other Shresta of somewhat lower status. Conversely, the lowest Shresta subgroups will sometimes accept husbands, as well as wives, from the Jyapu and other castes of the Shudra *varna*. The only untouchable caste that might be considered Hindu rather than Buddhist is that of the tailor-musicians (Jogi).

A considerable number of Newar have settled outside the Katmandu Valley. Some of these enclaves have abandoned Newari for Nepali, given up the caste system, ceased to observe many Newar customs and, retaining their Newar identity, have intermarried with other ethnic groups. On the other hand, where the Newar outside the Valley form compact communities in administrative and trading centers, they retain their traditional culture and social organizations, and they marry only within their own group.

Tharu

The largest of a number of little-known ethnic groups in the Nepalese Tarai is the Tharu, who are also found in the Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh, west of Nepal. Those in Nepal were enumerated at more than 300,000 in the census of 1952–54. Two groups, the Bhoksa in the west and the Mechi in the east, appear to belong to this ethnic group. Their cultural patterns in the last century were said to resemble those of tribal groups in the Bihar State of India. The little information available on the Tharu in Nepal today suggests that, like those in Uttar Pradesh, they have been increasingly subject to Hindu influences.

The Tharu apparently have largely abandoned their earlier pattern of shifting cultivation for wet-rice agriculture with the result that most of their scattered villages have become permanent settlements. Each house in a village is usually set apart from the others by its surrounding fields. Villagers are united by close ties of kinship and each settlement is a tightly knit social unit of cooperation and mutual obligation.

The village has a council which arbitrates disputes and a headman who collects taxes and rents, paying them either directly to a government tax office or to a tax concessionaire who may have a government contract to collect taxes in more than one village. The headman usually has a messenger to assist him, who also acts as a sort of town crier. Most villages also have a shaman who propitiates and exorcises evil spirits, sacrifices to the gods (who include Hindu deities and Moslem saints as well as indigenous gods) and prescribes herbal and magical remedies for the sick (see ch. 9, Religion).

Originally, the Tharu were organized into endogamous units (*kuri*), which were divided into two groups of unequal status. In recent years, however, in India and presumably in Nepal the higher status group has begun claiming royal descent from Rajput, or Thakur, ancestors, who allegedly intermarried with the Tharu after their flight from the

Moslem conquerors of northern India. The group of lower status has not attempted to claim royal descent and its members call themselves simply "Thakur" rather than "Rana (royal) Thakur." Neither group should be confused with the Pahari Thakuri caste. While the superior group, the Rana Thakur, has become a single endogamous unit, the lower group has retained its separate endogamous *kuri*.

Indians of the Tarai

Little detailed information on the Indian-derived majority of the inhabitants of the Nepalese Tarai is available. Although most of this group are Nepalese nationals, they are culturally and linguistically part of the larger population of the adjacent north Indian plain of which the region is a geographic extension. Indeed, many villages straddle the international boundary, and, with the difficulty of communications with the interior of Nepal, the Tarai continues to be socially and economically oriented to the neighboring areas of the Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Most of the country's small Moslem population is concentrated in the Eastern and Midwestern Tarai. The few Buddhists in the area are found mainly in the east. The castes of the Nepalese Tarai are those familiar in adjacent parts of India, and significantly few of them are present elsewhere in Nepal.

Others

Along the northern edges of the Tarai, the Gangetic Plain gives way to the foothills of the Himalayas, the Siwalik Range and the Mahabharat Lekh. Various small ethnic groups inhabit the dense, malaria-infested monsoon jungles of the area. They include such groups as the Darai, Rajbansi, Chepang, Ksunda, Kumba, Majhi, Raji, Satar, Jirel and Byansi. These peoples who formerly lived as small bands of hunters and gatherers have not been studied in this century, and it is not known how many remain. Some, such as the Rajbansi, who are also found in the Darjeeling District of West Bengal and in Sikkim, are said to be related to peoples in Assam. Probably many of these groups in the Tarai practice slash-and-burn agriculture, shifting their settlements periodically when the fertility of the land is exhausted. Presumably, many of them speak Austro-Asiatic languages, particularly those belonging to the Munda branch of that family. Some, however, such as the Byansi, speak Tibeto-Burman languages. They have long been subject to the influence of the predominantly Hindu culture of the Tarai, and this process can be expected to continue.

Tibeto-Nepalese

The Tibeto-Nepalese category includes both indigenous and recently arrived peoples. The Tamang, Magar, Rai, Gurung, Sunwar and Limbu have occupied the valleys of eastern and central Nepal for centuries; some of the Bhote, or Bhotiya (from the Tibetan name for Tibet), in the high Himalayas on the country's northern border have come from Tibet in modern times. In 1961 the whole category may have numbered about 2 million—roughly 20 percent of the total population. The Tibeto-Nepalese groups range in size from the Tamang, with an estimated 500,000 persons, to the Sunwar, with perhaps no more than 20,000. Although the various groups are concentrated in particular areas, individuals and small communities of most of them are found in many parts of the country. They are predominantly subsistence farmers and stockraisers, and those in the high altitudes of the north live a seminomadic existence, seasonally pasturing their herds at higher and lower elevations.

There has been some ethnically based political sentiment among them, as in the case of the long semiautonomous Kiranti (Rai and Limbu) in the east. The linguistic and cultural similarities among the various Tibeto-Nepalese groups are too general, however, to give the whole category any real sense of common ethnic identity. They speak a number of related but mutually unintelligible languages, many of which are complicated by dialect divisions. The majority adhere to a Tibetan-derived Buddhism but many have been Hinduized by contact with the Indo-Nepalese, and a locally varied shamanism, which persists alongside their more formal religious beliefs, further reduces the force of religion as a unifying bond. All of these groups, even in their areas of greatest concentration, are scattered in numerous self-sufficient rural communities in which the strongest ties are those of kinship and locality.

Many of the Tibeto-Nepalese groups, such as the Gurung, Tamang, Sunwar, Rai and Limbu, retain vestiges of a social division of the Tibetan type into aristocrats and commoners. Formerly, the aristocracy did not intermarry with commoners and constituted a landowning elite of officials and priests. The aristocrats generally retained their local preeminence for some time after the Gurkha conquest in the eighteenth century, frequently becoming unofficial agents of the new dynasty as tax collectors and custodians of public order. The Tibeto-Nepalese aristocracies still enjoy a favored economic position, but their hereditary privileges have increasingly been challenged by commoners returning from service in Gurkha regiments with pensions and savings which have enabled them to acquire land and influence in their communities.

Tamang

The Tamang are divided into named patrilineal exogamous clans, some of which consider themselves to be related by descent from a remote common ancestor. Intermarriage between these brother-clans is not permitted on the ground that it would be incestuous. There is also a status division between clans which have married only into other Tamang and Sherpa clans and those which have intermarried with Newar, Gurung and Magar. The two divisions of the Tamang normally do not intermarry.

The Tamang live in villages composed of several hamlets, the inhabitants of each of which apparently belong to a separate lineage. In areas where the Tamang are the predominant ethnic group, each clan has rights over certain areas of untaxed land which is owned in common (*kipat*) by clan members. Depending upon the size of the village, there may be more than one *mulmi* (headman, or tax collector) whose office rotates among the householders of the clan owning the *kipat* in the village. The *mulmi* is responsible not only for collecting land taxes but for controlling the village forest and for arbitrating disputes.

In addition to the *mulmi*, each village has a *dhami*, or priest, who normally belongs to the clan of the village founder and who conducts the seasonal agricultural rites and offers sacrifices to the deities and spirits. In a village containing several clans, each clan may have a *dhami* to conduct rites in honor of its ancestors and often to act as shaman to contact the gods and spirits. The larger villages in predominantly Tamang areas also have Buddhist temples (*ghyang*), which are similar to the Sherpa and Tibetan *gompa*. Occasionally, there are small monasteries of celibate monks and perhaps a few nuns.

In areas where the are in the minority and particularly in the hills surrounding the Katmandu Valley, the Tamang have become tenant farmers, day laborers and porters, carrying trade goods. In these areas of mixed population, where the Tamang live among Pahari and Newar castes, they are gradually assuming the character of a caste of low economic and ritual status, although they appear to retain their Buddhist religion.

Magar

The Magar are most numerous in the mountains of central Nepal but they are also found in other parts of the country, particularly the east. Some of the more northern Magar, though retaining their Magar identity and regarding themselves as superior to their Tibetan neighbors, have adopted Tibetan speech and dress. In this, and in their adherence to Lamaist Buddhism, they contrast with the Magar farther south who have been subject to strong Hindu influences. These Magar communities, long in contact with the Indo-Nepalese, have accepted Hindu religious beliefs and practices in varying degree and been drawn into the caste system. Nepali has become the first language of many.

Ties of kinship and marriage connect neighboring Magar villages, and clan membership acts to extend the sense of group identity beyond the village community. As in earlier times, the patrilineal Magar clans are apparently divided into high and low status groups. Some Magar, however, claim that the clans are all of equivalent status. Marriage between members of the same clan does not seem to be prohibited so long as the couple is not of the same lineage. The landowning unit appears to be the nuclear or the extended family. There are some landless families, however, who support themselves by sharecropping and day labor. Others engage in craft skills, mining and, in the north, the salt trade and pastoralism.

Rai

The largest Tibeto-Nepalese group in eastern Nepal is the Rai, and Rai are also found farther east in India, Sikkim and Bhutan. In Nepal the group contains two major divisions, the Khambu and Yakha, both of which are organized into patrilineal clans and lineages. Linguistically, the Rai are commonly grouped with the Limbu, Thami and Dhimal as speakers of Kiranti dialects.

Much of the little known about the Rai relates to those who have emigrated from Nepal to work in the tea gardens around Darjeeling in India. These people have adopted various Hindu social and religious elements as superior to their own. These borrowings, however, seem to have augmented rather than to have replaced their native customs. Among the Rai generally, whether Buddhist or Hindu, shamanism and the cult of lineage ancestors persist as an important form of religious activity.

Gurung

The Gurung are organized into patrilineal, exogamous clans, divided into two groups of differing status—Charjat and Solahjat. Each of these two divisions, in theory, although no longer in fact, is endogamous and the group of lower status, the Solahjat, frequently intermarries with other ethnic groups as well as with the Charjat. The Charjat clans apparently are descended from a privileged class in early Gurung society, which comprised the royal lineage, high officials and hereditary priests. Until recently the largest landowners and the most important village officials were members of Charjat clans. Service in the Gurkha regiments as commissioned and nocommissioned officers has given many men of lower status Solahjat clans the means to acquire large landholdings and membership in the village councils. However, most village headmen still come from the Charjat clans, and Charjat continue to own most of the valuable irrigated riceland. Many of the Gurung depend more on animal husbandry than on agriculture for their subsistence, grazing their cattle on the communally owned mountain meadows in the summer and feeding them in winter in fields at lower elevations.

Although a considerable portion of the Gurung are Lamaist Buddhists, many have adopted Hinduism. Probably shamanism persists among all of them. Gurung villages, especially in the north, are reported to have women's clubs or dance houses, in which on suitable occasions the young people hold all-night parties, singing, dancing, smoking, eating, drinking and courting. It is probable that these clubs have been abandoned in the more Hinduized Gurung villages. The dance house institution is present among the Bhote, from whom it may have been borrowed, since the northernmost Gurung speak Bhote dialects as well as Gurung and closely resemble the Bhote in their pastoral way of life and religious observances.

Sunwar

The Sunwar patrilineal exogamous clans reportedly are divided into two groups of unequal status. The group of lower status, as among the Tamang, is said to be descended from marriages of Sunwar men with women of other ethnic groups. The higher status group presumably has married only into the other Sunwar clans. Further information is lacking, but the Sunwar apparently maintain close relations with the Gurung and Magar and share many of their social patterns.

Limbu

Relatively little has been reported about the Limbu. They speak a Kiranti language, as do the Rai, whom they also resemble in their organization into exogamous patrilineal clans. Their villages lie to the east of the Rai toward the boundary with Sikkim and India, and reportedly there is some intermarriage between them and the Lepcha who have come into the area from Sikkim. Intermarriage with the more Hinduized Rai is also common. The Limbu village is said generally to comprise several lineages. Land seems to be held in common by extended kin groups under the *kipat* system, with individual families having use rights. In theory such holdings cannot be alienated, but they can be mortgaged, and it appears that among the Limbu this has led to the effective concentration of much of the land in the hands of a few headmen. The Limbu are said to maintain Buddhist lamaseries. Shamanism is also practiced, and the role of shaman is hereditary in certain lineages.

Bhote

Information about the Bhote groups, except for the Sherpa and the Thakali, is scanty. All apparently show the common Tibeto-Nepalese hereditary social dichotomy into high and low status divisions. Among the Sherpa, at least, the higher division is more numerous. The inferior division in all groups seems to be associated with tasks regarded as ritually dangerous or morally reprehensible, such as slaughtering animals or disposing of the dead. In marriages between Bhote of different groups, the partners are expected to be of equivalent status.

The patrilineal and exogamous clans of the Sherpa are not localized but are widely distributed over the Sherpa area. Neither a residential nor an economic unit, the clan is important as a device for regulating marriage, and it has some ceremonial functions, as when fellow clansmen in the same village pool their resources for a feast when they have brought their animals down to the main villages from the high pastures at the end of summer.

The socially and ritually integrated community among the Sherpa is the main village with its Buddhist temple (*gompa*). Each family has its principal house here, but most also own smaller dwellings at higher and lower altitudes. During much of the year various members of any particular household are likely to be away from the main village, cultivating valley fields during the short growing period and tending their herds at higher or lower pastures depending on the season. Households vary in composition from those consisting simply of the nuclear family to polygamous units based on marriages between a man and several women or a woman and several men (usually brothers). As sons marry, they usually receive a share of the family's property in land and animals and set up new households. The youngest son or, in the absence of a son, the youngest daughter inherits the residual estate and supports the aged parents.

Differences in wealth among Sherpa villagers are considerable but, more than among the agricultural populations at lower altitudes, prestige depends not merely on wealth but on its conspicuous and socially meritorious expenditure. A rich man is expected to make donations to the *gompa*, give alms to lamas or nuns, hire lamas to recite religious texts at funeral services, purification ceremonies and memorial rites for ancestors, build temples, stupas, prayer walls and provide feasts for fellow villagers and lamas. All this tends to redistribute the wealth acquired through trade and animal husbandry and prevent any permanent monopolization of resources and concentration of wealth.

The small Thakali population, situated on the upper reaches of the Kali Gandaki River—south of Mustang, on one of the major trade routes between India and Tibet—has long been deeply involved in wholesale trade between the two countries and has thus been exposed to considerable Indian influence. The shrine Muktinath in their area is a sacred place for both major religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, although it seems originally to have been a Buddhist shrine. The Thakali are reported to have four named patrilineal exogamous clans. Four lineages of one of these clans living in the main town of Tukucha are said to monopolize the long-distance wholesale trade; the remainder of the group engages mainly in farming and to a lesser degree in animal husbandry.

A tendency among the Thakali in the younger generation to turn away from the traditional Bhote culture and lamaist religion has been accentuated by the Indian education of a few and by influences from the Katmandu Valley. For many who have adopted it, Hinduism seems to mean little more than acceptance of the caste system, and, although Buddhist temples are allowed to fall into decay, Hindu temples are seldom built to replace them. The older people, who largely remain lamaist Buddhists, are said to lack the knowledge and training to defend their faith against either the indifference or the criticism of the young.

Foreigners

The foreign community in 1963 consisted of perhaps a few thousand persons in the diplomatic and aid missions of various countries and specialized agencies of the United Nations and the small staffs of a few mission-supported schools and hospitals. The group included an unknown but sizable number of Indian advisers and technicians. Likewise unknown, but reportedly between 60 and 70 Chinese Communist engineers are directing the construction of the road running southwest from Kodari on the Tibetan border toward the Katmandu Valley. There has also been a growing number of tourists, mountaineers and scientific investigators from other countries.

Until 1951, Nepal was closed to foreigners, except for the few who came by official invitation. There was, however, little possibility of controlling the entry of Indians and Tibetans into areas outside the Katmandu Valley. No data are available on the total number of alien Indians and Tibetans permanently residing in Nepal. Of the Indians, several thousand are said to be members of the Marwari caste engaged in trade and moneylending in the larger towns. About 7,000 refugees from Communist-controlled Tibet were living in small, scattered settlements, mainly along the northern border east of the Jumla area (see ch. 21, Public Order and Internal Security).

CHAPTER 5

FAMILY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Politically united in the late eighteenth century, Nepal remains socially diverse. Little, except the frequently remote authority of the royal government and limited trade relationships, exists to relate the various areas of the country and the numerous ethnic groups to each other. Even within a particular ethnic group an active sense of collective identity hardly goes beyond the cluster of neighboring villages and, at most, as in the case of the Kiranti in the east, may extend throughout a region. Differences in economic circumstances provide a scale against which it is possible to classify the population into a small group of wealthy, a middling and also small group of the moderately prosperous, and the numerically predominant poor. On none of these levels, however, would there be much, if any, sense of common interest or shared goals across ethnic or caste lines.

The caste system, historically introduced from Hindu India by migration and conquest, structures the social life of nearly 80 percent of the country's population, largely living in the south and west, and in the Katmandu Valley. By contrast, Buddhism and cultures of a sub-Tibetan type prevail in the north and east. These two patterns represent significantly different ways of life—one compartmentalized by caste, the other relatively uncomplicated by hereditary ranking, except in some groups by a simple division between aristocrats and commoners. Each dispensation, however, contains groups as different in language and tradition as the Hindu Pahari and Newar or the Buddhist Bhote and Limbu.

Within the plural structure of the society, certain uniformities narrow the distance between one group and another. Thus, Hinduism and Buddhism provide common denominators of religious belief and practice in different regions, and the mingling of the two—as among the Newar—has produced a distinctive synthesis. Nepali, the official national language, is the first tongue of more than half of the population and a spreading second language among the remainder. The caste system, in which a sizable majority of the people are involved, fragmentizes the community into hereditary compartments of ritual and social status, but it is also associated with a shared body of religious belief and a normative set of premises about human relationships. Moreover, the numerically and politically dominant Hindu elements have tended to assign a place in the hierarchy of caste even to non-Hindu groups, many of whose members have been strongly Hinduized. Still another factor softening the sharpness of ethnic contrast is the similarity of family and community life throughout most of the country. Details differ, but in the agricultural villages—in which 97 percent of the population lives—the more or less extended family marks the perimeter of the strongest loyalty of the individual, and, for most, the widest field of social action is the local community.

The emergence of an integrated structure of society implies, not the disappearance of ethnic difference, but the growth of social interaction and interdependence among the numerous ethnic and local groups into which the people are divided. Progress in this direction, until 1951 inhibited by the defensively traditionalist policy of the Ranas, continues to be complicated by caste and hindered by the Himalayan terrain, poor communications and an undeveloped economy. Change inevitably will be slow, but it is being accelerated by two dynamic factors: government action and influences from the outside world. The effect of both is to enlarge the areas of shared thought and experience in Nepalese life.

The commitment of the government to the creation of a genuinely national society is stated explicitly in the Constitution:

> It shall be the objective of the State to promote public welfare through the establishment of a just social system by bringing about, with a broad-based national outlook, the unification and assimilation of the interests of various classes and professions and by bringing about a uniformity in national life.

The government effort, although slow, is broad in scope, comprehending a wide range of political, economic and social measures. Thus, the *panchayat* system of government councils, established in 1960, was introduced to provide both a uniform apparatus of national and local administration and a training vehicle for popular participation in government. The economic development envisaged in the Five-Year Plan and the Three-Year Plan is aimed not only at increasing the national income and raising the general standard of living but at ending regional and local economic isolation and creating an integrated national economy. The expanding public school system is spreading the use of the official national language and inculcating a body of national ideals in the younger generation. Associated with this domestic activity has been the opening of the country to foreign influences which, in the form of material aid, scientific knowledge and social ideas, are tending to erode the traditional particularisms and contributing to the growth of national and international orientations.

Nepalese society, meanwhile, continues to be a complex of ethnic communities and caste groups rather than a unitary structure. Numerous similarities of culture and circumstance exist, but their translation into a conscious sense of social relationship and national identity has only begun.

The vast majority of the people live in small villages, bazaar settlements and market towns. Villages vary in size and composition. Some are no more than hamlets of five or six houses; others are sizable communities made up of a number of neighboring hamlets. The hamlet, as among the Bhote, may contain only a few closely related families comprising a single small lineage or part of a lineage, or, as among the Tamang, it may comprise a much larger lineage group. The Pahari village generally includes a number of castes, each of which in small communities may be represented by only a few closely related families. In more populous places the caste groups are larger and may occupy different neighborhoods or separate hamlets.

In these small communities, whether organized on caste lines or not, the strongest social tie is that of kinship. The individual confronts the community primarily as a member and representative of a kinship group. Traditionally, and largely still, he inherits not only his social status but his prospects. Individual choice in such matters as marriage, place of residence and occupation is restricted by customary rules or subject to family decision. Kinship obligations not only govern personal behavior, but the family—ideally in an extended form—is the basic economic unit, and local political authority is likely to reside with the heads of the senior lineages. Modern influences and the action of the national government in the realms of social legislation, public services and economic development are tending to reduce the size and importance of kin groups larger than the nuclear family. There also appear to be signs that the force of family controls on the individual is beginning to weaken.

All groups appear to trace descent through the male line. Beyond the nuclear family, consisting of father, mother and children, the actual size and cohesiveness of the kin units formed on this basis vary from one ethnic group to another. Thus, the clans of some of the Tibeto-Nepalese are huge aggregations of families regarded as related through a remote common ancestor. Among the Indo-Nepalese, although clans exist, effective kin ties do not generally extend beyond the lineage, a smaller and more immediately related group of families. In all elements of the population the circle of actually interacting kinsmen tends to be largest among the wealthy and those with hereditary claims to high status.

The household, depending on ethnic group and economic circumstances, may consist of no more than a husband, wife and unmarried children, or it may be a much larger establishment. Among the Bhote it is sometimes polyandrous, consisting of a woman, two or more husbands—usually brothers—and their offspring. In other groups, however, it ideally consists of a man and wife or wives, their unmarried children and their married sons with their wives and children. The group may also include, on a temporary or permanent basis, a few other more distant relatives. In most groups a daughter at marriage normally leaves the parental household and goes to live in that of her husband. Reportedly, among the Pahari, Limbu and Bhote, a family with a daughter, but no son, may bring a son-in-law into its household in order to keep an able-bodied male in the group and in the expectation that there will be a grandson to inherit. An alternative is to adopt a son.

Detailed information is lacking, but inheritance of property appears to be patrilineal in all groups. In the Hindu majority all sons of the deceased inherit equally, although the youngest son may be treated preferentially. In the absence of sons, brothers and more distant patrilineal kinsmen inherit. Unmarried daughters are said to be included with sons as direct heirs in some Tibeto-Nepalese groups. Among the Bhote, women apparently enjoy inheritance rights only slightly inferior to those of men.

The constituent nuclear families in a large household have their own room or rooms in the common dwelling or a detached unit in a cluster of dwellings. They may share a single kitchen or hearth, or each may have its own. The head of this extended family is in most groups theoretically the eldest male. In practice, it appears that personal qualities often outweigh the consideration of age and that a man who is more vigorous and able than his elders may take control. Family property is held in common and all members able to work are expected to contribute to the maintenance of the group. The head of the household exercises stewardship over the joint property and he generally makes the final decisions on expenditures and other actions affecting the group. Domestic affairs are supervised by the senior woman of the family. Typically, those under her charge are her daughters-in-law, although they may be younger sisters-in-law or younger co-wives in polygynous households. Her authority is apt to be most strongly felt in houses with only one hearth, and friction among women is evidently a common cause of the breakup of such households.

The nuclear family, which tends to rely on its own resources, has greater independence in the management of its affairs than it would have in an extended family household. In principle at least the rights and interests of the nuclear family are nowhere completely submerged in any larger group. A son, upon marriage, for example, may ask for his share of the family estate and establish his own household.

The lineage, larger than the extended family, is not a residential unit. Its member families, which recognize a common male ancestor no more than a few generations removed, generally live in the same community and may make up the entire population of a hamlet, but they may also be settled in different places. Lineage leadership theoretically devolves upon the senior male or males of the group, although personal qualities, wealth and achievement are no doubt important factors in the assumption of the leadership role. Traditionally, among the Pahari and apparently the Newar, the line of succession is from the lineage head through his brothers in descending order of age to the eldest of his own or his brothers' sons. Lineage functions apparently range from little more than occasional ceremonial observances, as among some of the Indo-Nepalese, to the holding and management of communal land in various Tibeto-Nepalese groups.

Among most groups, lineages are united into clans, each of which looks back to a remote and often hypothetical common male ancestor. The kinship tie, traceably close within the lineage, is more tenuous within the much larger clan group. The principal and often the only function of the clan, especially among the Pahari, where it is seldom, if ever, a localized group, is the regulation of marriage through the general prohibition of unions between members of the same clan. The number of clans in different ethnic groups varies. The approximately 274,000 Magar enumerated in the 1952–54 census, for example, were said to have 7 clans, while over 20 were reported for the Gurung with about 100,000 fewer persons. The clan represents the largest unit in the country organized on the basis of kinship. The term "tribe" has sometimes been applied to whole ethnic groups, but it implies a greater extension of kinship ties and degree of political integration than seems to exist in any of them.

The commonest form of marriage in all groups is monogamy, but both polygyny and polyandry are also practiced. Polygyny (marriage in which a man has more than one wife at the same time), probably present in some degree in all groups, is most frequent among the Hindus. Polyandry (marriage in which a woman has more than one husband at a time) seems to be limited to the Bhote. Available information about the new legal code (Mulki Ain) promulgated in 1963 includes no reference to polyandry, but the code is reported to permit a man who has one wife to take a second only if the first is incurably ill or for 10 years has been unable to bear children. Other provisions prohibit child marriage, allow intercaste marriages, grant the right of divorce (previously forbidden to Hindus) and sanction the remarriage of widows.

In most groups, marriage—especially a first marriage—has traditionally been an event in which it is taken for granted that parental wishes and family interests overshadow the personal preferences of the bride and bridegroom. Arranged marriages and the employment of intermediaries in the negotiations are common, especially among the Indo-Nepalese. Some Tibeto-Nepalese, on the other hand, leave considerably wider latitude to their children in the selection of marriage partners—a circumstance which may be related to the comparative economic independence and social initiative enjoyed by women in these groups.

Marriage among Lamaist Buddhists appears to be regarded as a secular contract which can be terminated at the discretion of either spouse. Religious observances associated with weddings center on a reading of certain Buddhist texts and, among the Bhote, the bride is not present during the reading. Hindu groups recognize both secular (*lyaite*) and sacramental (*byaite*) unions. Ideally, the sacramental form is employed for women of the clean castes who have not been married before.

The Pahari sacramental wedding ordinarily takes place out of doors in a temporary pavilion. The ceremony, conducted by a Brahman priest, includes the ritual dipping of water and the circumambulation of a sacred fire by the bridal pair. A caste mark is placed on the bride's forehead and the part in her hair is sprinkled with vermilion. She receives gifts of clothing and jewelry from the bridegroom and bathes his feet in token of submission to him. The ceremony is preceded by a feast given by the bride's family and followed the next day by one given by the family of the bridegroom.

The sacramental marriage established by the *byaite* ceremony is held to be indissoluble, and in theory, even the death of the husband does not free the woman to remarry. In practice, widows of marriageable age do remarry and sacramental unions are broken by divorce or desertion. A woman who has been previously married, however, may enter into only a secular or *lyaite* marriage. Secular marriages are also common among those too poor to afford the expense of sacramental nuptials and among low-caste families who are denied the services of Brahman priests. Secular unions, which are established with little or no ceremony, are recognized as legitimate but carry none of the prestige of the sacramental form. Most marriages between Pahari men and women of other ethnic groups are said to be secular.

The traditional marriage ceremonies of high-caste Newar are extremely elaborate. Girls at about 6 or 7 years of age are "married" to the *bel* fruit or wood apple, which is then thrown into a sacred stream. Having in this way symbolically become a married women, it appears that later, following the divorce or death of an actual husband, the girl may remarry without any loss of status. When the girl has reached marriageable age, her family may be approached by an intermediary on behalf of a family with a son. If the girl's family is willing to consider the match, protracted and delicate negotiations about property settlements follow. Certain ritually prescribed gifts must be sent at intervals to the bride and her family by the family of the bridegroom. The latter also gives a feast at which the bride receives a dowry of household goods from her kinsmen. A ceremony is held on that occasion transferring responsibility for her to the family of her future husband. Returning again in procession to the bridegroom's house, the bride is formally welcomed by her mother-in-law. Touching her forehead to the bridegroom's foot, the bride signifies her submission to him, and the couple is considered man and wife. The ceremonies, however, continue for several days of feasting during which the new wife ritually receives the right to worship at the shrine of her husband's family.

The old legal code forbade intermarriage between persons belonging to ritually clean castes and untouchables. Certain restrictions also applied to marriage between members of different clean castes, but high-caste men were not prohibited from establishing secular unions with women of the lower clean castes or of ethnic groups not regarded by Hindus as in the untouchable category. A woman, on the other hand, was forbidden by the code to marry below her caste even if the man's caste were ritually clean. An approved exception was in the case of marriages between women of the Thakuri royal family and Rana men.

Penalties were provided for violation of the law, but the strongest deterrent was no doubt the pressure of custom and opinion. The marriage of a Pahari Brahman girl to a Thakuri man evoked no strong criticism, but a liaison between her and a man of low caste brought severe sanctions unless the family was able to hush the matter up. The girl could expect to be expelled from her caste and cut off from family and friends. She and any children of the union could hope for no higher caste status than that of her husband.

High-caste Pahari men with more than one wife frequently take their additional spouses from other ethnic groups. These secular marriages do not ordinarily establish any active social connections between the families of the man and the woman. The children of such marriages, depending on the father's caste, are either of his caste or a somewhat lower one. For example, the offspring of a Pahari Brahman and a woman of another ethnic group (or of the Pahari Chetri caste) are assigned to the Khatri caste. Children of Brahman and Thakuri marriages are Hamal. The offspring of a Chetri man and a non-Pahari woman, however, are considered to be Chetri, although they have somewhat lower status within the caste than children whose parents are both Chetri, provided that the mother has not been married previously.

In addition to caste considerations, a variety of prohibitions, prescriptions and formal preferences influence the choice of marriage partners in different groups. The Magar, for example, favor marriage with a mother's brother's daughter, whereas the Gurung and Tamang approve of marriage with the daughter of either a mother's brother or a father's sister. Among the Rai and a number of other groups, a widow is expected to marry one of her dead husband's younger brothers and a widower to marry one of his late wife's younger sisters. Other traditional rules, explicit or implicit, prescribe behavior toward relatives by marriage. Parents-in-law are to be treated with formal respect. In some groups, certain affinal kinsmen must be avoided or treated distantly, but it is appropriate to banter with certain others. Among the Rai, for example, a man and his wife's older sister and a woman and her husband's older brother are expected to avoid one another; a man and his wife's younger sister and a woman and her husband's younger brother, on the other hand, have license to exchange broad jokes and personal witticisms.

Polyandry, a feature of Tibetan traditional culture, in Nepal appears to be restricted to the Bhote, although it probably was at one time practiced by some other Tibeto-Nepalese groups. The custom has been reported for the Pahari of Kumaon and Kashmir, but it is deplored by the Nepalese Pahari and other Hindus generally. Its incidence among the Bhote is not known, but in one village only 4 out of 38 households were polyandrous; the dominant pattern is monogamous.

Polyandry, as practiced by the Sherpa and other Bhote groups, is most commonly of the fraternal type—the marriage of one woman to several brothers simultaneously. The husbands more rarely may be an uncle and his nephews or a father and his sons by a different wife. A group of brothers in a polyandrous household normally takes additional wives only if the first wife is barren or considerably older than the younger brothers. Observers disagree as to whether one husband occupies a special position in the marriage, although the difference in age alone could be expected to lend authority to the eldest. The children of a polyandrous marriage are said to consider all of their mother's husbands to be their fathers and to inherit from all of them as a group without regard for actual biological parentage. Should the family be dissolved, paternity may be decided by drawing lots, by order of birth or by decision of the mother.

Caste and Ethnic Ranking

The Pahari residing in the Katmandu Valley, from whom the ruling elite has long been drawn, tend to view the caste structure as a single pyramid in which the Pahari Brahman castes have the highest ritual status. The Newar, on the other hand, see it as two parallel systems in which their own priestly castes, both Hindu and Buddhist, are equal in ritual purity to the Pahari Brahmans. Both Pahari and Newar view the other ethnic groups as so many unitary castes. A Pahari view of the pyramid of caste ranking from highest to lowest might be as follows:

- Pahari Brahmans
    - Upadhyaya and Kumai
    - Jaisi
- Newar Brahmans
    - Deo and Jha

- Newar Buddhist priestly castes (Banras)
    - Gubhaju and Bare
- Pahari Kshatriya
    - Thakuri
    - Hamal
    - Chetri
    - Khatri
- Newar Kshatriya
    - Malla, Pradhan, Rajbandari and possibly others
- Vaishya
    - Magar and Gurung
    - Some Newar castes (most Shresta, who are traders with Tibet, stonemasons, tilemakers, bakers, carpenters and others)
- Shudra
    - Newar agricultural castes and such groups as painters, dyers, cowherds, oil-pressers, barbers, truck-gardeners and others
    - Limbu and Rai
- Untouchables (*achut*)
    - Tamang
    - Bhote and other Mongoloid groups
    - Tharu and other Tarai groups considered "primitive"
    - Large number of Newar and Pahari unclean castes

A somewhat different conception of the caste hierarchy was reflected in interviews with recruits to Gurkha regiments in the 1920's. At the top were the Pahari Brahmans, followed by the Thakuri, Chetri, Gurung, Magar, Newar, Limbu, Rai, Sunwar, Tamang, Tharu and finally the unclean castes, including the Bhote. A similar investigation today would probably reveal some rise in the status of one Bhote group, the Sherpa, whose prestige has been enhanced by its role in mountaineering expeditions.

The question of caste hardly arises for the many Tibeto-Nepalese communities. The members of these communities, when not unaware of the status assigned them by the Hindu sector, are likely to be indifferent to it. Insofar as they accept caste-based notions of social rank, the Tibeto-Nepalese tend not only to see themselves at a higher level than do the Hindu Pahari and Newar but to differ as to ranking among themselves. Thus, it is doubtful that the reported Rai assumption of superiority to the Magar and Gurung is accepted by the latter. Moreover, the status of a particular group is apt to vary from place to place depending on its relative size, wealth and local power.

Even among the caste-structured Indo-Nepalese communities of the Katmandu Valley and the Tarai, firm consensus as to relative position on the scale of caste exists only for the higher and lower extremes. Intermediate castes may, within limits, rise or fall locally in relation to other castes.

Basically, the preservation of caste status, prerogatives and obligations implies the existence of a closed community organized from top to bottom on caste lines. Noncaste groups, unless they can be effectively ignored, must either be assimilated to the system or accommodated to. Europeans and Americans, for example, technically are ritually unclean and so may not share water or food with high-caste persons or enter their houses. In fact, most high-caste Hindus in regular contact with Europeans and Americans accept them on terms of social equality and to one degree or another adjust or ignore the ritual barriers between them. Again, in communities consisting of a Hindu minority and a numerically and economically dominant casteless ethnic group, the Hindu not only cannot deal with his casteless neighbors purely in terms of caste but he finds himself treated simply as a member of another ethnic group.

Caste status, in any event, does not necessarily correspond to socioeconomic level. Many persons of high caste are extremely poor peasants with little access to channels of wealth, modern education and political influence. Although some Brahmans are well-to-do landholders or civil servants, many are simple farmers. Moreover, the Thakuri, with lower ritual status than the Brahmans, has a higher social position, as it is the caste of the royal family and the group from which many members of the ruling elite have come. On the other hand, a low-caste status short of untouchability does not always imply a correspondingly low socioeconomic level. The Newar oil-presser caste of the Shudra *varna*, for example, includes a number of prosperous lineages, some of whose members occupy high civil service posts, and the caste now claims to be at the top of the Shudra *varna*. Members of Newar agricultural castes who have given up their traditional occupation tend to drop the caste name and claim higher status. The Newar, moreover, permit a certain degree of individual social mobility through the mechanism of intercaste marriage. A prosperous Jyapu farmer, for example, can arrange a marriage for his son with the daughter of a poor member of one of the lower subdivisions of the Shresta caste. Both the husband and the children of such a marriage are raised to the status of the mother. In later generations, further marriages can result in a rise of the family's status to a level of equality with the highest subdivisions of the Shresta caste.

Ritual purity involves many factors and permits the drawing of fine distinctions, even between members of the same caste, which do not affect the status of the caste as a whole in relation to other castes. Among members of the Chetri caste, for example; persons of unmixed Chetri ancestry are recognized as having *jharra* (pure) status in contrast to the somewhat less pure descendants of marriages between Chetri and members of other ritually acceptable castes or ethnic groups. Although *jharra* and non-*jharra* may not eat together, the distinction has not led to subdivision of the caste, and non-*jharra* families in time also may become *jharra* by marrying their sons to girls of *jharra* status. *Jharra* status is a source of pride, however, and it is most common, not among wealthy Chetri families in the Katmandu Valley but among Chetri peasants in the hills.

An attempt to systematize *jharra* status distinctions and link them with rights of succession to high public office was made in the 1930's by the dominant branch of the Rana lineage, which controlled the then hereditary prime ministership of the country. The lineage was divided into three classes, "A," "B" and "C"—terms devised by European observers but adopted by the Ranas. The Class "A" Ranas were the children of Rana fathers sacramentally married to Chetri women of *jharra* status or to Thakuri women. Class "B" Ranas were the offspring of Rana men and Chetri widows or divorcees. The children of Ranas and women of other ethnic groups constituted Class "C" Ranas. Only Class "A" Ranas—and later, only those whose mothers were of the royal clan of Shah of the Thakuri caste—could succeed to the prime ministership. As most Rana men of any importance had several subsidiary wives and concubines, the number of Class "C" Ranas was quite large. The effect of the new system was to alienate many of the members of this group which had formerly identified themselves with the Rana leaders.

POLITICOECONOMIC STRATIFICATION

Nepalese society, seen in terms of differences in wealth and access to political power within a national framework, can be divided into a small ruling elite, an intermediate group of government functionaries, landholders and merchants, and a peasant base comprising the vast majority of the population. Except for the elite, these are descriptive categories rather than integrated social entities. The economic circumstances of the farmer, for example, are much the same throughout Nepal; culturally, however, the numerically predominant peasant population comprises not one but many small societies. The much smaller intermediate stratum is only somewhat less diverse. Its relative economic and educational advantages and its occupational activities, however, have broadened its concerns beyond the purely local sphere and introduced among its members elements of shared interest. The smallest and least diverse of the three categories is the ruling elite.

During the Rana period the highest circle of the elite consisted of the Thakuri royal family and the Chetri lineages, from which came the country's hereditary prime ministers. This elite, concentrated in the capital city, was Pahari and urban and, like the government which it controlled, its connections with the rural and ethnically varied population outside the Katmandu Valley were tenuous. King Tribhuvan's restoration to power took from the Ranas the hereditary right to rule in his name. The old Rana families, although they no longer monopolize the key positions in the government, retain their wealth and social prestige and are well represented in the command of the military establishment.

The altered political position of the Ranas and the King's need for men to support and carry out his program have opened the circle of the elite to new elements. The Pahari predominate, but the Newar, formerly relegated to a kind of client status, are also represented. The members of the new Pahari elite, like those of the older one, are of high-caste, well-to-do families. Unlike the older group, most are from outside the Katmandu Valley—mainly from the Tarai. Most, if not all, acquired their early political ideas as students in India during the independence movement there, took part in the opposition to Rana rule, and gained experience in the partisan politics of the 1950's. Their prestige owes more to high office—which they hold at the King's favor—than to hereditary claim.

Outside the capital the top of the social ladder is also occupied by new and old groups. The new group, however, consists of the higher ranking functionaries of the central government; the old, of the traditional local elites. The members of the new group, appointed by the King and representing his authority, generally lack ties in the local community and their efforts to exercise authority often encounter indifference and sometimes hostility. Moreover, some members of the old elite have been given appointments as royal functionaries in their areas and a number of rajas of principalities in western Nepal have been confirmed in their titles and authority during their lifetime. Elsewhere, the scarcity of trained persons to fill important civil service posts frequently leaves local affairs to the traditional leadership.

The intermediate stratum has both urban and rural segments. In the towns and cities it contains mainly the larger merchants, schoolteachers, technicians, policemen, government clerks and other functionaries not involved in official policy formulation and decision making. In the countryside it includes the small landowning farmers with surpluses to sell, Gurkha military pensioners, and persons engaged in trade on a moderate scale. Land, jewelry, small hoards of gold or silver and, among the Bhote, livestock are the main forms of wealth. Among Buddhist groups traditional leveling mechanisms have worked against the development of great disparities of wealth. The Sherpa, for example, tend to value wealth less for its possession than for its distribution in the form of charity to monks and expenditures for village festivals and other merit-making activities, such as the building of temples, prayer walls and stupas. Outlays for weddings and funerals and other family-centered observances have a similar but less pronounced effect among the rural Pahari.

The lowest stratum, comprising the vast majority of the population, includes members of all ethnic groups and castes, townsmen and villagers, tenant farmers, landless agricultural laborers, artisans, peddlers, porters and day laborers. One of the few channels for social advancement for persons in this category in some ethnic groups is military service as mercenaries in the Gurkha contingents of the British and Indian Armies. For most, expectations through life have been determined by birth. The group is benefiting only slowly and unevenly from the social and economic programs of the government. The benefits, however, are reflected not only in the improved circumstances of some members of the category but in the rising expectations of many more, and these expectations are encouraged by the stated goals of the government. These developments point to the emergence, however distant, of a more egalitarian, achievement-oriented social order (see ch. 11, Constitution and Government).

CHAPTER 6

HEALTH AND WELFARE

The mode of life of the majority of the people reflects the isolation and poverty of rural areas and the concentration of the nation's small wealth in the hands of a few. Most families are poor and many are deeply in debt. Serious deprivation is apparent in the bad diet and inadequate housing of most of the people and in the general unavailability, particularly in the countryside, of modern medical care, education and other social services. Floods, droughts, famine and landslides periodically strike various localities. The few rich live comparatively well, but share with the rest of the people such problems as the lack of an abundant and pure water supply and the prevalence of a great variety of virulent diseases.

Despite these conditions there is optimism about the future in many villages where private citizens or groups of citizens are trying to raise the level of health and welfare and to fill deficiencies in public services. In some predominantly Gurkha areas, for example, returning soldiers have taken the initiative in organizing and financing schools and small dispensaries. Elsewhere, local authorities have formed committees to provide a public water supply or have seen to the improvement of trails, roads and bridges. Development schemes introduced and maintained by the central government are also bringing about long-term improvements on a nationwide scale, but their effectiveness is often attenuated by the shortage of funds or by administrative problems caused by transportation difficulties and the lack of modern communications.

STANDARDS OF LIVING

The country is economically undeveloped, and its limited wealth is unevenly distributed among the population. The few sizable estates belong to a handful of leading families in Katmandu, whose incomes derive principally from land and foreign investments and whose standard of living is substantially higher than that of the rest of the people. Smaller but still appreciable differences in living standards are apparent in different parts of the country, and even within a small village there may be a great disparity between the resources of one or two affluent families and those of their less fortunate fellow villagers. The problem of poverty is most acute in the west, especially in the Piuthan district about 145 miles west of Katmandu, which is said to be the most destitute and backward district in the kingdom. The east includes relatively prosperous sections such as the predominantly Sherpa Okhaldhunga district, south of Mount Everest.

Peasant cultivators, who comprise the overwhelming majority of the population, live typically in simple, sparsely furnished dwellings of mud, wattle or stone. They produce all or nearly all their own food, which is none too plentiful, even during the best harvest, but must barter for or buy other needed commodities such as salt, cloth and kerosense. Most farms are too small to produce a sizable, salable surplus, so that the average cash income among families of this group is the equivalent of from $5 to $10 per year.

Many farmers are deeply in debt. Interest rates are high and loans are frequently carried over extended periods of time. The usual sources of credit are Brahman moneylenders, mostly former civil servants who built up their personal wealth while in office, and the relatively large landowners of the village, in whose hands money and land were becoming increasingly concentrated before the initiation of the land reform program in 1955.

HEALTH

Diet and Nutrition

The common diet is high in carbohydrates and low in protein and vitamins. Nutritional deficiencies are manifested in all parts of the country in low resistance to disease and in the prevalence of beriberi and goiter. Shortages of food develop in particular sections from time to time because of droughts, floods or marketing and transport difficulties.

Rice is the staple food wherever it can be grown; elsewhere, dependence is on potatoes, corn, millet or barley. One of these foods is the basis of the main meal of the day, eaten in late morning. If income permits, a similar meal is eaten in the early evening. It is customary to drink tea in the morning and at other times during the day.

Rice is ordinarily accompanied by *dal,* a sauce made of lentils cooked with salt and saffron, and sometimes a few onions fried in *ghee* (clarified butter). A rough kind of bread is made from millet; other cereals are made into porridge. Onions, beans, radishes and a variety of additional vegetables and fruits are consumed when available.

Milk, cheese and *ghee* represent a regular and important part of the diet, but meat, fish, game, poultry and eggs are relished luxuries. Not all such foods are considered suitable for consumption by all ethnic and social groups, however. In addition to abiding by the proscription against the killing of cattle or eating of its flesh as do Hindu of all castes, those of the highest and most orthodox castes may also refuse to eat chicken or ducks. On the other hand, all will usually eat wild game, including pigeons, deer, wild boar and goat meat. Most Newar eat buffalo meat, but the highest castes among them do not.

Water Supply

The four major rivers and their tributaries drain nearly the entire country, but public water supply systems making use of these resources have yet to be developed. Consequently, there are intermittent or chronic scarcities of water in both urban and rural areas. Low pressure often causes stoppages in piped water systems. Even in places where wells, springs and rivers furnish an adequate supply, the water is generally contaminated and dangerous to drink without boiling. Development and purification of the water supply should, in the opinion of many Nepalese, have priority over programs to improve sanitation, medical care and agricultural methods.

In early 1963 both the central government and local authorities were at work on irrigation and drinking water projects with Indian financial support. Part of the funds were to be spent for improvement of the water supply at Katmandu, where engineers hoped to increase the daily available supply from 10 to 25 gallons per person.

Diseases

Poor health conditions in the early 1960's were evident in the high rate of infant mortality, the short life expectancy, the prevalence of disease and the large number of persons suffering from physical handicaps of various kinds. It was estimated that as many as two out of every three children failed to survive infancy and that life expectancy averages between 25 and 30 years.

The most prevalent of the more serious diseases are malaria and tuberculosis. Malaria is most common in the central part of the Tarai, but it also occurs over the entire southern portion of the country from the Indian border northward to the lower slopes of the high Himalayan range. Over 1.2 million persons in the eastern part of the country alone are said to have the disease. The incidence of tuberculosis is high throughout the country, especially in urban areas.

Other diseases of major importance are smallpox and cholera—which occur in epidemic form and are greatly feared—typhoid, syphilis, leprosy, filariasis (a parasitical infestation), trachoma and, in the mountain regions, goiter. Dysentery and other intestinal diseases are so commonplace that they are thought of as normal rather than as pathological conditions. The incidence of asthma seems to be relatively high. Alcoholism is a problem among returned Gurkha soldiers, a number of whom reportedly drink heavily out of boredom in their retirement.

MEDICAL PRACTICE

Popular Medicine

Popular medicine derives from a large body of commonly held assumptions about magical and supernatural causes of illness. Sickness and death are thought to be caused by ghosts, demons and evil spirits or to result from the evil eye, planetary influences or the displeasure of ancestors. A variety of precautions against these dangers is taken, including the wearing of charms, the avoidance of certain foods or sights during pregnancy, and the propitiation of ghosts and gods with sacrificial gifts.

When illness strikes or an epidemic threatens, the counsel of one of a variety of types of medical practitioners is sought. Among the Rai of the Eastern Mountain Region, it is the custom, for example, to consult a *bijuwa* (a shaman whose treatment consists mainly of the recitation of sacred literature in the presence of the patient). If planetary influences are suspected, the family may seek the services of a more costly and usually less available *jotishi* (Brahman astrologer), who determines which planet has been offended and as a result is causing the illness, as well as the type and size of offering required to placate the planet and restore the patient to health.

Beliefs of this sort are widespread, especially in rural areas, where they are taken most seriously. But word of the wonders of modern medicine and its effectiveness against diseases hitherto accepted as incurable has spread to the remotest parts of the country, and its benefits are greatly valued, if not frequently experienced or scientifically understood.

Also practiced generally throughout the country is the Ayurvedic system of medicine, which evolved among the Hindus about 2,000 years ago. It was originally based on the *Ayur-Veda* (the Veda of Long Life), but a vast literature has since accumulated around this original text. According to Ayurvedic theory the body, like the universe, consists of three forces—phlegm, bile and wind—and physical and spiritual well-being rests on maintaining the proper balance among these three internal forces. Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia is based on roots, herbs and plants. Nepal is reported to have about 140 Ayurvedic physicians, popularly called *vaid*, 34 Ayurvedic dispensaries and a national college of Ayurvedic medicine in Katmandu. Ayurvedic medicine is subject to some administrative control by the Nepalese Government.

Modern Health Services

Government activities in the field of medicine and public health are largely the responsibility of the Department of Health in the Ministry of Health, Irrigation and Power. The Department's principal functions are the administration of existing government hospitals and rural health centers and the construction and development of additional facilities of this type; supervision of the training of nurses and other health personnel; promotion of improved sanitation; collection of vital statistics; promotion of health education; and direction of a malaria eradication project in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO). The Department also conducts smallpox and cholera projects, which by 1963 had vaccinated more than a quarter of a million persons. The Department is headed by a director and deputy director. Both of these officials are doctors, but the Department suffers from a lack of trained medical and paramedical personnel.

The Department is responsible for the support and administration of about 40 hospitals, which range in capacity from 7 to 168 beds. Among them are 36 general hospitals (of which 4 have 50 or more beds), a tuberculosis sanitarium, 2 leprosariums, and a maternity hospital and child welfare center. Also under the jurisdiction of the Department are 93 district health centers—small clinics with less than 10 beds, under the care of partially trained technicians.

Other medical facilities are maintained under private auspices. One such institution is the small hospital in Pokhara, in the Western Mountain Region, maintained by the District Soldiers Board, a charitable committee composed chiefly of Indian army pensioners. Another is the 100-bed Shanta Bhawan Hospital in Katmandu. Staffed by 6 physicians and 35 graduate nurses, it has a network of affiliated clinics and a nurses' training school. It is the main project of the United Medical Mission, a Protestant organization founded in 1954 by several American physicians. It has also established two other hospitals, several dispensaries and a leprosarium, and extended its activities into the fields of education and village development. Other medical facilities are run by the British-sponsored Nepal Evangelistic Band in Pokhara and American Seventh Day Adventists in Banepa.

Hospitals are in general crowded, ill-equipped and understaffed. Only the largest have X-ray machinery and other modern equipment. Furnishings are minimal. Beds in some institutions are of simple wooden construction, without mattresses or linens. In the leading government hospital in Katmandu, electric current is undependable, so refrigeration is intermittently lacking. Until a decade ago nursing care was provided only by male attendants, called compounders, who acted as orderlies, or by relatives of the patient who often moved into the hospital themselves, further increasing congestion. Hundreds of ailing persons, some coming from distant places, are turned away each month by Katmandu hospitals because they do not have facilities to care for them.

The government has been taking steps to improve existing hospitals and health centers and establish new ones. Its efforts have been directed especially at remedying the long-standing imbalance in the distribution of medical facilities which has favored the Katmandu Valley and a few towns. Since 1956, when the Five-Year Plan (1956–61) was launched, 93 local health centers have been opened in outlying areas which previously were without modern medical care, and 4 new hospitals have been established.

The United States is assisting in a complete renovation of Bir Hospital in Katmandu, which is the country's oldest hospital and its largest, with 168 beds. With the completion of scheduled improvements, including construction of new rooms for patients and residential medical quarters, renovation of existing buildings, and purchase of such basic equipment as X-ray machinery, sterilization facilities, incubators and hot-water heaters, patient care can be greatly improved.

A model hospital on the outskirts of Katmandu was built and turned over to the Nepalese Government by the Soviet Union in 1963. Completely modern, it is well equipped and has facilities for 30 adults and 20 children. The staff is composed of 9 physicians (of whom 6 are Russians), 6 graduate nurses (1 a Russian) and other specialists. Another Soviet-built hospital in Nepalganj was opened in April 1963.

Despite progress, there was still dire need of additional facilities. As of late 1962, Nepal had only one hospital bed for about every 11,000 inhabitants. Modern medical care remained available for the most part chiefly to the inhabitants of Katmandu Valley and a few large towns. There were no public hospitals at all in three areas—Mahakali and Karnali in western Nepal and Gandaki in the north-central region—and 10 of 75 administrative districts lacked even a local health center.

Moreover, with only 128 Western-trained physicians, or a ratio of about 1 to 73,000 inhabitants, the country had the lowest proportion of doctors to its population of any Asian nation. Twenty-six were foreigners, principally Russian, British and American. Most of the physicians were found in the larger centers where the best hospitals were located, so that villagers, who made up about 75 percent of the population, rarely had the benefit of their services. Information was not available on the comparative number of physicians in government employment and private practice.

Nepal has no medical school nor is any contemplated in the near future because of the cost. Most medical students are educated in Indian universities. As of late 1963, none of the country's more than 30 small colleges offered a full premedical course, but educators were strongly urging that the lack be remedied. There are two nurses' training schools, both in Katmandu. One is associated with the United Mission Hospital. The other, established by the WHO, is the larger of the two and is run by the Nepalese Department of Health. It offers a 3½-year course, divided between academic and practical work, and leads to an examination for a registered nurse degree. By mid-1962 it had 24 graduates, who were serving along with about 15 Western-trained nurses in various clinics and hospitals throughout the country.

In addition to the nurses' training school, the government also operates an institution for auxiliary health workers in which students are prepared to become pharmacists, sanitarians and laboratory and clinic assistants. Established in Katmandu in 1955, it is partially supported by the United States Government and the WHO. The training period is 2 years. Graduates are assigned to a district health center where they perform such tasks as giving injections, setting fractures, doing minor surgery and supervising well-digging and latrine-building.

WELFARE

Before 1951 the responsibility of providing for the sick and destitute fell almost exclusively on friends and families—the government remaining aloof from such need. The overthrow of the Ranas in 1951 marked a major change in public welfare policy, with the authorities undertaking a series of reforms and improvement programs intended to alleviate most of the social ills. Thus, a program of village development was initiated in 1952 (see ch. 11, Constitution and Government). Administered since 1963 through the *panchayat* system, the aim of the program is to stimulate and support economic growth at the local level and to encourage local initiative in undertaking public projects in the fields of education, agriculture and health and sanitation. Evolved under the temporary guidance of the United States Operations Mission (USOM), the program as of mid-1963 was administered through 55 village development centers, serving 6,800 villages with a combined population of about 2.25 million persons. Similar but smaller programs are operated in the Katmandu Valley by the Indian Aid Mission to Nepal and in the Gurkha District by the United Medical Mission to Nepal.

By July 1962, total expenditure for village development amounted to NR26.3 million (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary) out of a total of NR73.81 million spent for public works and services under the Five-Year Plan. The funds had gone into the construction of roads, bridges and dams, the establishment of village schools and libraries, and the digging of wells and latrines. Over 800 development officers, social education organizers, youth program officers and other workers had been trained in two rural institutes and the Home Science School, partially supported by the Ford Foundation. With an additional allotment of NR10 million to be expended under the Three-Year Plan (1962–65), further progress in development work is anticipated.

A small-scale but vital relief operation for Tibetan refugees who fled to Nepal after the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet in 1950 is being conducted by the International Red Cross. The refugees, said to number between 10,000 and 20,000 persons of varying regional, social and occupational backgrounds, live mainly in the area around Mustang, on the Tibetan border about 130 miles northwest of Katmandu. Thousands of others have settled in Bhutan, Sikkim and widely separated areas of India. Most of the refugees in Nepal are farmers, stockbreeders, traders and their families, and monks, but the groups reportedly also include several thousand armed Khampa (former members of the Dalai Lama's army) from Kham province in Tibet. The International Red Cross has spent nearly a million dollars on emergency relief and help for the refugees in temporary settlements and camps, pending the arrangement of a plan for permanent rehabilitation.

CHAPTER 7

EDUCATION

Lacking a uniform national education system, the country has six different types of schools in operation: English schools, which offer primary and secondary education along traditional British lines; national schools, which offer 5 years of free primary education and use the Nepali language; vernacular schools, which provide secular instruction of widely varying caliber and content; Buddhist and Sanskrit schools, which are largely devoted to religious training; and basic (Gandhian) schools, which stress training in handicrafts. About one-third of these institutions are entirely supported and controlled by the central government. Of the remainder some receive grants-in-aid and are subject to nominal state control, but most are independently financed and administered.

The privileged access of members of the higher castes and wealthier economic strata to education was for centuries a distinguishing feature of Nepalese society. In the modern period the Ranas kept education the exclusive prerogative of the ruling elite; the remainder of the population remained largely illiterate. At the time of the overthrow of the Ranas in 1951, the level of education among the people as a whole was extremely low. Literacy among males was less than 10 percent; among women, less than 1 percent; and only 1 child in 100 attended school.

The next decade, however, was an era of rapid educational expansion. School enrollments, facilities, teaching materials and budget allocations rose to unprecedented levels as a result both of private initiative and an intensive government education campaign, strongly supported by the United States, India and various international agencies. By 1961 primary schooling was being extended to 1 child in 7, secondary schooling to about 1 in 50. Fourteen new colleges had been founded; the country's first university had been organized; and 2,163 students were enrolled in higher education institutions outside Nepal. Between 1953–54 and 1959–60 there was a 37-fold increase in funds for education and a 43-fold increase in enrollments.

Among villagers respect for education as an avenue to power and economic success is growing, and demand for opportunity is becoming more insistent. Many, however, continue to regard education not as a universal right but as the privilege of a chosen few. Educational planners and policymakers themselves have displayed some ambivalence, for although most have proclaimed their eagerness to establish a system of universay primary instruction, many have demonstrated in practice an inclination to sacrifice that goal in the interest of higher education for the few.

Debate among educational leaders has not been confined to the issue of whether the education of a trained elite should take precedence over universal primary schooling. There has also been lively discussion about the kind of curriculum which should be offered. Western education in the British tradition has dominated the field since it was introduced by the first Rana ruler who, with many of his countrymen, saw in it the secret of Britain's power. The English schools, which produced most of the national leaders of the twentieth century, continue to outnumber others, especially at the secondary level. At the same time traditional, religiously oriented instruction, such as is offered in classes in Buddhist *gompa* (temples) and Sanskrit schools, continues to have the support of some segments of Nepalese society, as does basic education, a version of the Gandhian, craft-oriented system adopted in India. Some local authorities, however, favor vernacular schools, in which pupils are given rudimentary instruction in reading and writing in the local dialect.

The establishment of a system of national schools in the mid-1950's represented still another approach to the matter of educational content. Arguing that the existing systems failed to reflect the cultural uniqueness and the economic needs of the people, its supporters developed a new curriculum, broader than that of the vernacular schools and stressing the study of the Nepali language.

Academic standards in the schools, while uneven, are generally low. The large percentage of students who fail the examinations given at the end of secondary school, after 2 years of college and after 4 years of college is an indication that many are inadequately prepared. Not only are many teachers without professional training, but there is a scarcity of textbooks in all fields.

HISTORY

Buddhist and Brahmanic Scholarship (To 1846)

Buddhism and Brahmanic Hinduism, with their emphasis on meditation and metaphysical speculation, dominated education until the beginning of the Rana period in 1846. Of the two traditions Buddhism was at first paramount, and by the mid-seventh century its monasteries had produced a number of scholars eminent in such fields as medicine, geography, astronomy and literature. After the tenth century the number of Buddhist monasteries declined, except in the northern region along the Tibetan border, and they were gradually supplanted by Hindu temples as the principal centers of higher learning in Nepal. Instruction was to a large extent tutorial, and, ideally, the system brought teacher and student together as master and follower in a long-term relationship (see ch. 8, Artistic and Intellectual Expression; ch. 9, Religion).

Apart from monastic education, which was never extended to the mass of the people, little was available in the way of formal instruction. A few schools were operated by Christian missionaries until their expulsion in 1768, and private tutors were sometimes employed. Later, guild training provided some education for the children of particular occupation groups.

The training of most Nepalese children consisted of an informal apprenticeship in the work performed by adult members of the community. It began in the family with simple tasks at the age of 4 or 5 and progressed to adult tasks at 10 or 11.

Education for the Elite (1846–1950)

During the 104 years of their rule, the Ranas remained opposed to any form of public schooling for the people. Nevertheless, they and other members of the ruling elite provided formal instruction for their own children to prepare them to take their place in the governmental structure.

Of primary importance to future development was the decision made by the founder of the Rana regime, Sir Jang Bahadur Rana, to give his children an English education rather than religiously oriented training in the traditional manner. He was apparently motivated both by his admiration and respect for Western technological achievements and by a desire to please the British, who were increasingly strengthening their position in India. In 1854, Jang Bahadur engaged an English tutor, who held classes for his children in the Rana palace. His successor opened these classes to all Rana children and formally organized them as Durbar High School. Other than a few Sanskrit institutions in Katmandu and some village literacy classes, there were no other schools in the country in the late nineteenth century.

A brief shift in government educational policy came in 1901 when Prime Minister Deva Shamsher Rana took office and called for sweeping educational reforms. He proposed the establishment of a system of universal public primary education, with Nepali as the language of instruction, and to open Durbar High School to children who were not members of the Rana clan. Shamsher's policies were so unpopular with those around him that he was deposed within a few months. His reforms did not entirely disappear, however. A few Nepali-language primary schools in the Katmandu Valley, the hill regions and the Tarai remained open, and the practice of admitting a few middle- and low-caste children to Durbar High School was continued.

Before World War II several new English middle and high schools were founded in Patan, Biratnagar and elsewhere, and a girls' high school was opened in Katmandu. In the villages popular respect for learning was increasing largely as a result of the influence of returning Gurkha soldiers, many of whom learned to read and write in the British service. Some retired Gurkha began giving rudimentary education to the children in their villages.

In the early twentieth century education beyond the high school level could still be obtained only outside the country. Because such facilities were not available in the country, less than a dozen Nepalese received higher academic or technical training during the period. Of these, most attended either Patna University or Banaras Hindu University in India, although a few went as far away as Japan. Some who studied at these institutions in the years just before World War I were influenced by the opposition of Indian students to British rule. Seeing in this a potential threat to Rana supremacy, Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher Rana in 1918 established a college for Nepalese students in Katmandu. Known as Tri-Chandra College, it offered a 2-year course in history, mathematics, logic and languages. In 1924, with an enrollment of 30, it became a full 4-year institution.

After World War II, more or less forced to do so by the example of growing educational facilities in China and India, the Ranas made a modest effort to provide more schools. Their principal gesture was the establishment of a number of basic schools modeled on those in India. Just before the revolution in 1951 the country had 310 primary and middle schools, 11 high schools, 2 colleges, 1 normal school and 1 special technical school.

Revolution and Reform (1951–63)

The approach of national leaders to education in the postrevolutionary period differed radically from that of their Rana predecessors. The Interim Government Act of 1951 proclaimed the secularity of the schools and promised a new climate in which freedom of speech, of the press and of assembly would prevail. It also resulted in the establishment of a separate Ministry of Education. The introduction of free and compulsory education is a major objective of social policy in the Constitution of 1962 (see ch. 11, Constitution and Government).

The expansion of education begun in the final years before the Rana overthrow swiftly picked up momentum. By 1954, 927 new primary and middle schools had been opened, increasing capacity at this level more than seven-fold and bringing total enrollment to 59,000 in comparison with 8,495 in 1951. Secondary and higher education facilities also multiplied rapidly. By 1954 there were 83 high schools with 12,700 students and 14 colleges with 915 students, as compared with 11 high schools with 1,600 students and 2 colleges with 250 students in 1951.

To improve standards and to develop a uniform program the Ministry of Education in early 1954 appointed the National Education Planning Commission, which made an exhaustive study and submitted recommendations to the Minister the following year. The Commissioner provided a master plan for educational development. The most important goals defined therein were: that within 25 years primary education was to be universal; that within 10 years secondary, academic or technical education should be extended to about 20 percent of all youth and some type of higher education to about 5 percent of all young persons; that within 10 years Nepal should have a national university; and that within 25 years all adults desiring to become literate should have the opportunity to do so. The first phase was to be put in operation during the period of the Five-Year Plan (1956–61).

This was to be accomplished through private initiative, increases in the education budget, and the aid of foreign and international agencies, of which the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United States and India were to be the principal contributors. The official provision for education—which did not necessarily, and actually seldom did, represent the amount spent—multiplied more than 30 times between 1950–51 and 1960–61, when it was NR71,870,000 (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary).

By the early 1960's educational facilities had greatly increased and schools were being established even in such remote places as Sallyana in the western portion of the lower Himalayas and Kanchanpur in the western Tarai. Primary school enrollment rose from 26,186 in 1954 to 182,533 in 1961, and it was unofficially estimated that about 15.8 percent of children aged 6 to 10 were in school. In the same period, students in secondary schools increased from 17,700 to 21,115, and the number of high schools had risen from 83 to 156. Attendance at normal schools and special technical schools was about 2,173, and 5,143 students were enrolled in college.

All schools except the relatively few entirely supported by the central government charged tuition and admitted pupils selectively. Costs to the student varied with the institution in the higher grades. The fees charged by private and government-aided schools were regulated by the government and ranged from NR0.32 a month in the first and second grades to NR3.50 in the upper grades. Small as these sums were, they were prohibitive or burdensome for the average family; and the cost of board and room for students who could not live at home was completely beyond the means of the great majority. A few scholarship students were admitted free. Colleges, technical schools and the university also derived part of their support from student fees.

The United States has been providing financial and advisory assistance to Nepal since 1954. The Cooperative Services Program in Education, operated under joint United States Operations Mission (USOM) and Nepalese auspices, was maintained until 1958, when it was taken over by the Nepalese Ministry of Education. Other United States assistance so far has been concentrated in the field of primary schooling, teacher training and adult education.

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Administration

Responsibility for education is vested largely in the Ministry of Education, which in mid-1963 was headed by Kirti Nidhi Bista, who was also Minister of Transport and Minister of Communications. Other ministries and agencies operate programs of an educational nature on their own (see ch. 6, Health and Welfare). Responsible to the Minister of Education are a secretary, two under secretaries and numerous other lesser administrative officials who staff the various departments.

The principal functions of the Ministry are: the supervision of educational administration and finance; the selection, assignment, promotion and dismissal of teachers and staff of national schools; the inspection of all such schools through its 7 zonal inspectorate offices and 32 subinspectorate offices; and the exercise and control of the syllabus used in government and government-aided schools. The Ministry is represented on the national examination board. Private schools are autonomous, but those desiring government aid may invite the Ministry of Education to inspect them.

Primary and Secondary Education

The English schools offer both primary and secondary education. The combined elementary and secondary course covers a 10-year period, divided into the primary school grades, 1 through 5; middle school grades, 6 and 7; and high school grades, 8 through 10. The cycle ends in the examination for the school leaving certificate (SLC).

In the English schools rote learning and strict discipline are emphasized. The English language is taught from the second or third grade and is generally the medium of instruction in some classes at the secondary level. The curriculum also includes arithmetic, science, civics and history or geography. Agriculture, accounting, drawing and painting are offered as optional subjects. History is not a required course at the secondary level, and the student may elect geography in its place. The course covers three broad topics: Indian, British and Nepalese history, with emphasis given to the first two. The sections on Nepal deal primarily with developments since 1768.

The reform of the secondary curriculum in the English schools has been the subject of much discussion and debate. It has been proposed by educational planners that the established classical course of study in the high schools be replaced with a multipurpose curriculum which would provide youth with the vocational skills needed by the nation. Although efforts in this direction have been impeded by the traditional aristocratic disdain for manual labor, some progress had been made by the early 1960's. The multipurpose curriculum recommended in 1957 by the National Education Planning Commission had been introduced at the sixth and seventh grade levels at one school in Pokhara, and plans were well underway for the conversion of five traditional secondary schools to multipurpose high schools.

The national primary schools offer a 5-year program which includes reading and writing, arithmetic, social studies and health and nature study as principal subjects. In addition, some attention is given to arts and crafts and physical activities and games. Nepali is the official medium of instruction, but teaching in the local dialect for the first 3 years is permitted.

The range of studies in other schools is considerably narrower and in some cases focuses on a single discipline. The *gompa* emphasize memorization of Buddhist texts, and some music and instruction in religious painting is given. The Sanskrit schools, which are not formally divided by grade but offer secondary as well as primary education, stress the reading and commiting to memory of Sanskrit texts and have only recently begun to give some instruction in science and arithmetic. Like the *gompa* they provide a classical education leading to government employment or the priesthood. In the vernacular schools, children are given rudimentary instruction in reading and writing in their own dialect. Basic schools concentrate on handicrafts and agriculture, offering little of value to the urban student.

The number of children enrolled in the first grade of primary school is substantially greater than at any other level, and registration progressively diminishes in the higher grades. Primary school students make up about 90 percent of total school enrollment, and of this group about half are in the first two grades. Attendance is irregular; the rate of failure is high; and many children repeat grades. In 1961 two-thirds of the students who took the examination for the school leaving certificate given at the end of secondary school failed to make the passing grade of 30 per cent.

The high rate of failure is attributable in large part to the lack of trained teachers, the shortage of suitable textbooks (particularly in Nepali) and the general inadequacy of school facilities and equipment. Other problems are the incongruence of curriculum in relation to what is expected of the student in examination, the multiplicity of languages in the country and the bad health conditions. The scarcity of textbooks is being gradually alleviated, however. The country now has several modern printing presses, and the Bureau of Publications in the Ministry of Education has been established to produce textbooks and other literature for primary and secondary school children.

Higher Education

In 1961 there were 33 institutions of higher education, including 29 liberal arts colleges, three professional schools—in law, commerce and education—and one university. The oldest schools are Tri-Chandra College in Katmandu, founded in 1918, and the Sanskrit College in Katmandu, founded in 1948. The rest were established after 1951. Collectively they provide for over 5,000 pupils with faculty and staff numbering some 400. Some are open to both sexes. Three degrees are offered: intermediate arts (I.A.), bachelor of arts (B.A.) and master of arts (M.A.).

Tribhuvan University in Katmandu, chartered in 1959, as yet has no higher technical or professional schools and only nominal research facilities. It is governed by the Senate (of which the King and the Minister of Education are ex officio members) and a syndicate and includes faculties of arts, science, law, commerce and Sanskrit and culture.

In its less than 4 years of operation, Tribhuvan University has been beset by a number of administrative problems and has experienced a series of disrupting crises. In March 1963, for example, acting on an allegation that there had been a leakage of questions in the examination for the I.A. degree, the authorities canceled the examination. A number of students affected by the ruling interrupted the examinations being held for other degree candidates, tore up their papers and forced them to leave the hall.

Language problems are another area of difficulty. Although Nepali is officially the language of instruction at the University, English, which many students in the Sanskrit College do not know, has most often been employed in the classrooms. Instruction in Hindi was dropped in 1963.

Despite the expansion of higher education facilities in Nepal, many students continue to seek further education abroad. Of 2,163 persons (exclusive of military personnel) who had studied in foreign colleges up to 1961, 1,401 had received instruction in India, 225 in the United States, 100 in Malaya, 61 in the Soviet Union, 62 in the United Kingdom, and the remainder in other countries. The most popular fields of study were engineering, health, liberal arts and agriculture, in that order of importance.

Special Education

Technical

The Five-Year Plan provided for expansion of facilities for technical training on the lower and intermediate levels within the country and for sending students abroad for further study. Although progress was slower than anticipated, by 1961 nearly 4,000 persons had received specialized training at some 24 institutions. Among the most important of these were the Nurses Training School and the Health Assistance School in Katmandu, the rural institutes, and the Cottage Industries Training Centers, of which the main one was in the capital.

Adult Education

Adult education, much of it conducted on the radio, focuses mainly on teaching people to read and write. In the course of instruction, which is conducted in Nepali, students also acquire basic information on diet, baby care and health from reading materials prepared by the Bureau of Adult Education.

Teachers and Teacher Training

In mid-1961, Nepal had 6,832 primary school teachers, about half of whom had had no formal training. Secondary school teachers numbered less than 1,600. Untrained teachers, employed because of the shortage of fully qualified persons, in some schools made up as much as 50 percent of the faculty. An important component of the teaching community consists of retired Gurkha soldiers, who operate a number of local schools, including such an outstanding institution as the Pokhara Soldiers Board High School. Also important are American Peace Corps volunteers, who have been in Nepal since late 1962.

Teacher training institutions are of three types: the Normal School, established in Katmandu in 1954, mobile normal school teams, which move from one administrative unit to another providing a 10-month course in each area, and the College of Education in Katmandu, which trains secondary school teachers and upper-level administrators. This institution, now part of Tribhuvan University, offers a 4-year course for high school graduates, and a 1-year course for graduate students seeking additional professional training.

The organization of mobile teaching units was necessitated by the reluctance of teachers trained in Katmandu to leave the Valley. Teachers in government schools, who are recruited on the basis of competitive examinations, enjoy better pay, retirement benefits and greater prestige than other teachers. Indian teachers are hired by many schools in the Tarai, and Indian professors have been recruited in the past for service in Nepalese colleges and the University. The teacher frequently has to supplement his income with other work in order to provide his family with even a modest living.

EDUCATION AND THE SOCIETY

The traditional monopoly of educational opportunity by members of the wealthier class and higher caste groups is gradually disappearing. The national schools are free and open to all, and their enrollments are rapidly increasing. Nevertheless, private and government-aided schools charge tuition fees as high as NR35 per month in the upper grades, and most of their students are children of landlords, businessmen and government leaders. Students from upper-caste groups and wealthy families are generally far more able to continue their education beyond the primary level than others.

The long-standing prejudice against the education of women is gradually breaking down. School attendance among girls has risen sharply during the past decade, female students composing 37 percent of the total enrollment in primary grades in 1961 as compared with only 4.1 percent in 1954. Over 200 Nepalese women are college graduates.

Perhaps the principal determinant of access to education is place of residence. School facilities are most heavily concentrated in the Katmandu Valley area around Pokhara in central Nepal and in part of the Tarai. Since only a few primary schools have residential accommodations, relatively few—even of the children whose families might afford it—can go away to school.

CHAPTER 8

ARTISTIC AND INTELLECTUAL EXPRESSION

In the 1950's and early 1960's the arts were reviving after more than five centuries during which little of lasting significance was done. A new interest in writing, given impetus by the relaxation of the strict censorship which existed under the Ranas, brought some promising developments in literature. A number of poets were experimenting with new styles, and a few intellectuals were producing works on history, economics and social problems. Respect for learning is traditional, but interest in the humanities and fine arts was being subordinated to scientific and technical studies. Traditional scholarship, as represented in the study of sacred scriptures, was almost extinct except in Buddhist monastaries in the Mountain Region. Music and dance were favorite means of recreation and self-expression among villagers, and a few Nepalese popular singers had become favorites on Indian radio. However, contemporary development of architecture, painting and sculpture was extremely weak, and the standard of handicrafts was low.

By contrast, great achievements in the arts had been recorded in Nepal in two illustrious eras in the past. The seventh century and the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries were periods of great cultural vitality, when the style and standards of Nepalese sculpture, painting and, particularly, architecture were admired and imitated widely in southern and eastern Asia.

The contributions of Nepal to world culture in these periods were made almost entirely by the Newar in the Katmandu Valley, which was and continues to be the center of art and learning in the country. Virtually without exception, the source of inspiration for these Newari artisans was religious—a blend of Buddhist and Brahmatic traditions which had entered the Valley over the centuries in alternate waves from India and Tibet. Of the two traditions, the Brahmanic was the more pervasive.

INTELLECTUAL AND LITERARY CURRENTS

In the area of formal thought the paramount influence of Buddhist and Brahmanic tradition until the mid-nineteenth century was reflected in the preoccupation with philosophy and religion to the practical exclusion of all else. The learned devoted themselves to meditation in search of release from worldly concerns, and scholarship centered on commentaries on sacred texts, mostly in Sanskrit. Original thought and critical inquiry were alien to the intellectual climate.

The Katmandu Valley was a great center of learning at two periods in its history: first, under Amsuvarman (A.D. 620–640), when Buddhist influence was predominant; and later, during the period of Brahmanic ascendancy, culminating in the reign of Jayasthiti Malla in the late fourteenth century. In the artistic and intellectual ferment of both eras the religious scholar, the imaginative architect and the talented sculptor enjoyed high prestige.

In secular and scientific knowledge, ideas and values from the outside world have slowly penetrated Nepalese society despite the efforts of the Ranas for more than a century to insulate the country from them. They have gained currency not only among the educated elite in government, business and the professions in the Katmandu Valley, but in some degree have touched the people of hill villages. They have been carried there by Gurkha mercenaries returning from service with British and Indian forces outside the country. Since the fall of the Rana regime in 1951, the spread of Western-generated ideas has gained momentum. Customs and traditional beliefs, however, continue to offer more than nominal competition to the new forces impinging on Nepalese intellectual life, particularly outside the valley enclave of Katmandu.

Some prose and poetry continue to be written in Sanskrit, which for centuries was the language of the literate few. Since 1951, however, Nepali and English have been the principal literary languages. Recent publications include articles and full-length works on economics, history, international relations and social problems, as well as poetry, short stories and collections of folk tales. Outstanding among contemporary scholars are Balchandra Sharma, President of the Royal Nepal Academy, an honorary society for leading artists and scholars; and Dilli R. Regmi, an eminent historian.

A number of young poets show considerable promise, but none as yet has achieved the stature of the men who initiated the development of modern Nepalese literature. Bhanubhakta Acharya (1812–68) is known as the father of Nepalese poetry. His most famous work is the *Ramayan,* an epic poem telling the story of Rama, the incarnation in human form of the Hindu God, Vishnu. It was the first major work in the Nepali language. Laxmi Prasad Devkota (1903-59) was a linguist, essayist and, above all, poet, whose most popular work is the romantic tragedy, *Muna Mudan.*

Two contemporary literary figures, the poet, Lekth Nath Poudyal, and the dramatist, poet and essayist, Balkrishna Sama, have been giving the Nepali language a new richness, experimenting with fresh forms and styles. Poudyal, now honored as poet laureate, in the 1930's made his work the vehicle for carefully disguised political criticism of the Ranas. Sama is known for his pioneering work in modern poetic forms and more importantly for his dramas. Nationalist themes characterize much of the work of the younger generation of writers, some of whom studied in India, where they were exposed to liberal and leftist political influences.

As of mid-1963 the government, under the auspices of King Mahendra, was taking a number of steps to foster literary and intellectual development. Public funds were being used to finance the translation of foreign language texts, to support literary organizations and to subsidize a number of promising young writers. A number of foreign scholars had been invited to Nepal to teach and write, and delegations of Nepalese writers had been sent abroad. King Mahendra, who is deeply interested in the arts, has encouraged the restoration of historic monuments and has awarded medals to a number of leading scholars and writers. A strong effort is being made to develop education at all levels, and a large proportion of the national income is devoted to it.

ARCHITECTURE

In architecture the country has made a distinguished contribution to world culture. In the Katmandu Valley some 2,500 temples and shrines display the skill and highly developed aesthetic sense of a succession of Newar artisans. Many of the more imposing are the multiple-storied pagodas, which may have originated in this area and spread to India, China, Indochina and Japan.

At the same time that some Newar architects were endowing the Katmandu Valley with great monuments and temples, others were exercising their skills elsewhere in Asia. Particularly important in influencing stylistic developments in China and Tibet was Arniko, a Newar youth called to the court of Kublai Khan in the thirteenth century A.D. He is celebrated for his statues in copper and brass, portraits painted on silk, and for a golden temple he built in Tibet.

Virtually all the principal religious structures in Nepal are in the Katmandu Valley, except those at Muktinath, a pilgrimage site some 40 miles northwest of Pokhara, and Rummin-dei (Lumbini), birthplace of Buddha, about 8 miles south of Bethari in the Bhairawa District. A stupa (monument containing sacred relics) built at Patan in 250 B.C. by Emperor Asoka is the oldest structure in the country. Turret-shaped and surrounded by smaller stupas, it is ornamented with symbolic figures of the meditating Buddha.

Better known are the stupas at Swayambhunath, a Buddhist shrine high on a hill overlooking Katmandu from the west, and the Bauddhanath shrine, 4 miles northeast of the city. Both consist of a main stupa composed of a hemisphere topped by a tower decorated on the four sides of its base with huge pairs of blue eyes depicting the omniscience of the Buddha. They are surrounded by many smaller buildings and sacred images.

Other great temples in Katmandu include Pashupatinath (on the banks of the Baghmati Nadi), the largest and most sacred Hindu shrine in the country, and Nyatpola (in Bhadgaon), distinguished by the five pairs of figures derived from Hindu mythology which guard its entrance steps. Built in the early eighteenth century by Bhupatindra Malla, a great patron of the arts, it is in the classic pagoda style, a square entablature of brick rising in a series of successively smaller stories to a considerable height. Each story is capped by an overhanging tile or copper gilt roof; the supporting columns are overlaid with whole pantheons of intricately carved, garishly painted deities portrayed in ritually erotic postures. Door frames and window cornices are similarly decorated with deities, foliage and arabesque designs.

Another building completed under Bhupatindra Malla is the old royal palace at Bhadgaon, an imposing structure of great historical interest. The original building is of typically Nepalese brick and wood construction and is set off by a gate which is an example of the best of the goldsmith's art. The Ranas introduced the European neoclassical style of architecture and used it for many public buildings despite the disharmony between its massive marble and concrete forms and the indigenous traditional ones.

SCULPTURE, PAINTING AND HANDICRAFTS

In art and handicrafts, as in architecture, the Newar stand out. They have traditionally excelled in woodcarving, copper, bronze and brass work and metal statuary and have been proficient painters. Newar artists and artisans took their inspiration from India, in turn saw their own work followed to a large extent in Tibet. The earliest known Nepalese paintings—a series of illuminated manuscripts of the eleventh century—conform closely to the canons developed in the great monasteries of northern India under the Pala dynasty (approximately A.D. 750 to 1150). Similarly, in sculpture, the style of the earliest surviving metal effigies (approximately fifteenth century A.D.) suggests that of the twelfth century Pala images and of works of other Indian schools. Even as late as the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, the influence of Pala concepts and forms was still apparent in Nepalese sculpture, as evidenced in the elegance and graceful modeling of the multitude of bronzes still surviving from this period.

Sculpture underwent its golden age in the Katmandu Valley from the tenth to the sixteenth century. Newar artisans of that era made use of the balance of form and spontaneity of Indian models, adding, however, a feeling of rhythm that was exclusively their own. Among sculptures of that period which survive are images of Dinpankar Buddha in the Katmandu Museum and of Nateswar (the god of dancing) near the temple of Pashupatinath. Several pieces of sculpture in stone by unknown masters, believed to have been produced much earlier, still survive. Among the more notable is the famous image of the recumbent Vishnu, the original of which lies in a temple in the village of Buda Nilkantha near Katmandu. Some authorities date it from the sixth century.

Painting in the premodern period was seen as having its creative source in spiritual contemplation, and artists were interested in neither attempting to imitate nature nor portraying secular life. The painter was expected to convert his own spiritual experiences and visions into symbolic forms and colors with the aim of conveying his enlightenment to others. The best extant examples of their work are ancient illuminated manuscripts and scroll paintings executed in powerful and contrasting colors.

Related to the great achievements in sculpture and painting was the development of handicrafts and small industries. Crafts flourished in Nepal from earliest times, the physical isolation of most villages requiring that each community make what it needed. Pottery making, papermaking, wood carving, and the casting of hard metals were perfected in the Katmandu Valley by Newar artisans, whose aesthetic sense found expression in utilitarian as well as ornamental objects. Outside the Valley, other ethnic groups and occupational castes were associated with particular specialties. The Gurung and Limbu, for example, were noted for their woolen textiles. The cane and bamboo products of the Western Tarai area were particularly renowned.

Since the sixteenth century, painting, sculpture and crafts of all types underwent a steady decline, and in this sphere the modern period has not yet produced anything approaching the achievements of the past. In the twentieth century, owing to the importation of cheap manufactured goods from abroad, craftsmen have experienced little demand for their work, and what they have produced has often been of poor quality. In recent years, however, the government has supported the revival of certain traditional crafts with the Cottage Industries Program, under which young people are trained in such crafts as weaving, jewelry making and metalwork (see ch. 18, Labor).

Some jewelry work continues to be done. The most valued metals are gold and copper, which is considered sacred. Women ornament themselves with bracelets, necklaces, earrings and sometimes noserings. Amulets, bells, household containers and boxes of various types are also made of metal, often ornamented with conch shells, lotuses, wheels and other Buddhist symbols. Other craftsmen work in wood and ivory. Brocade is also made, and the purses carried by Newar are typically made of this material.

POPULAR MUSIC AND DANCE

Singing is a favorite pastime among villagers, for whom it affords both a means of emotional expression and an opportunity to display wit and imagination through the spontaneous composition of lyrics. People sing both for recreation and to relieve monotony and fatigue in their daily work. Song is almost invariably an accompaniment to such tasks as turning handmills, walking to the woods to gather fagots, and carrying loads along the trail. Communal singing is a standard part of the rice-planting process. Men preparing the soil and women transplanting the seedling work in accordance with the strong rhythmic pattern of the music, each sex vying with the other in improvising verse after verse sung to a traditional tune.

Leisure and formal occasions call for special songs, types of instrumental music and often dancing. One such occasion is the Saturday night gathering of soldiers in the garrison, where the group sits around a lamp, while a soloist sings and dances to the beating of a drum, handclapping and choral responses by the audience.

Although the subjects vary, folk songs are usually concerned with the beauty of Nepal's natural setting, the joy of the harvest, love and separation and, particularly, valor and gallantry in battle. The heroic exploits of Gurkha soldiers in distant theaters of war have inspired countless lyrics, carried from place to place by minstrels who accompany themselves on a *sarangi* (small stringed instrument). The *gaine* (ministrel) reminds the recruit leaving home:

> And why should you fear the foe?
> A son of Nepal knows no death
> Nurtured as he is in waters cool.
> He knows not how to retreat a single step
> Ever forward he marches on in the face of the enemy.

Most villagers are eager to hear popular songs from abroad as well as their own, and transistor radios are usually left turned to popular music programs. Gurkha soldiers returning from Malaya, Indonesia, Hong Kong and other distant points are sought out in the expectation that they will know the latest tunes.

Drums, cymbals and tambourines are the most common musical instruments. Among the drums are the *madal,* a narrow-barreled drum with beating surfaces at each end pitched to different keys, and the disc-shaped *damfu,* which is held in the left hand and hit with the right. One of the few wind instruments is the *narasingha,* a serpentine-shaped copper trumpet. Strict social conventions govern the production and playing of this and other locally made instruments, which in many instances are made by a low caste or untouchable group but may be played only by members of a high caste. Instruments of Indian derivation are used in connection with the religious chants and epic songs of Nepalese classical music, which is based on the scale pattern of the Indian *raga* (mode-fixed patterns) on which individual melodies, each associated with a particular mood, are based. Western band instruments of somewhat antiquated design have been in use by the Nepalese military for more than half a century.

Dancing is an activity generally limited to males. Forms of dance range from the stylized classical masked dances, based on subject matter taken from the Puranas (ancient Hindu epics) to the spontaneous grass-gatherer's dance popular among the Magar and Gurung. The latter is a vigorous communal dance involving much turning, twisting and leaping by the participants. Considerable uniformity in respect to dance costumes and basic movements is apparent in forms from region to region, but the tempo of most of the dances of the Tarai is said to be quicker than those of the Mountain Regions, where energy must be conserved.

CHAPTER 9

RELIGION

According to the 1952–54 national census, 89 percent of the population was Hindu, 9 percent Buddhist and the remaining 2 percent Moslem; fewer than 1,000 persons were Christian or of other religions. The figures tend to be misleading, however. No actual count was made along the northern border in the Himalayas where the Buddhists are most numerous, and the census estimates for this group are undoubtedly low. There is much intermingling of Hindu and Buddhist beliefs, and many of the persons regarded as Hindus in the census could with as much justification be called Buddhists. Neither is an exclusive faith, and many Nepalese regard the country as being about equally divided between Hindus and Buddhists.

Hindus and Buddhists tend to be concentrated in the areas where Indian and Tibetan cultural influence, respectively, has been dominant. The Katmandu Valley, where a variant, non-Tibetan form of Buddhism has been preserved by some of the Newar, is an exception. There, Buddhism has survived largely by becoming, in regard to philosophical bases and many of its ritual practices, reabsorbed into Hinduism as a variant sect. In the twentieth century, however, orthodox Buddhism has been introduced into the Valley.

Both Hinduism and Buddhism have assimilated many elements of shamanism, an indigenous folk religion based on a belief in supernatural beings, often personifications of natural phenomena, and on the ability of certain persons, called shamans, to communicate with them. In Tibet, by a reverse process, shamanism took over most of the beliefs and practices of Buddhism and reorganized itself as Bon. Gradually displaced by Buddhism in most of Tibet, Bon has survived in some northern areas of Nepal, and in Sikkim and Bhutan. Shamanism continues to be practiced to some degree by nearly all Nepalese ethnic groups.

There have been no overt religious conflicts between adherents of the two dominant Nepalese religions. The caste system, upon which traditional Indo-Nepalese society was based, is closely associated with Hinduism, which spread to communities of the Buddhist Tibeto-Nepalese ethnic groups living among the Pahari and Newar.

The Tibeto-Nepalese groups most influenced by Hinduism are the Magar, Sunwar and Rai. Hundu influence has been less strong among the Gurung and Limbu, who continue to employ Buddhist monks in their important religious ceremonies. Although the two largest clans of the Magar—the Rana and Thapa—also clan names in the Pahari

Chetri caste—are relatively orthodox in their practice of Hinduism, most of the other clans, particularly those living closer to the Bhote groups in the north, remain Lamaist Buddhists.

HINDUISM

The origins of Hinduism go back to the meeting of pastoral Aryan tribes spilling over the Hindu Kush from Central Asia with the urban civilization of the Indus Valley and with the tribal cultures of various hunting and gathering peoples in the area. Unlike other world religions, it has no single founder. In about 1200 B.C. a body of religious texts, collectively called the Vedas, were compiled, and these—elaborated throughout the centuries by the Brahman priestly castes—form the theological rationale for the religion.

Basic Beliefs

Hindus have always felt that the absolute (the totality of existence, including God, man and universe) is too vast to be contained within a single set of beliefs. Their highly diverse and complex religion embraces a wide variety of metaphysical systems or viewpoints (*darshana*), some mutually contradictory. From the *darshana*, an individual may select one which is congenial to him or conduct his worship simply on the level of morality and observances. Religious practices also differ somewhat from group to group, and the average Hindu does not need any systematic formal creed in order to practice his religion. He need only comply with the customs of his family and social group.

Some of the sacred Vedic texts are regarded as revealed sacred knowledge of divine origin (*srute*). The rest (*smriti*) are based on tradition handed down from ancient sages and holy men. Certain Vedic beliefs are common to all Hindus.

One basic concept is that of *dharma*—natural law and the social and religious obligations it imposes. It holds that every person should play his proper role in society as determined by his *dharma*. The system of caste, though not essential to philosophical Hinduism, has become an integral part of its social expression. Under this system, each person is born into a particular caste whose traditional occupation—although members do not necessarily practice this occupation—is graded according to the degree of purity or impurity inherent in it. Grouping of the castes into five broad categories—the four *varna:* Brahmans, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra; and the untouchables (*achut*)—permits drawing broad distinctions of ritual purity (see ch. 4, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

Other fundamental ideas common to nearly all Hindus concern the nature and destiny of the soul and the basic forces of the universe.

The souls of men are seen as separated portions of an all-embracing world soul; man's ultimate goal is reunion with this absolute.

Karma (universal justice) is the belief that the consequence of every good or bad action must be fully realized. Another basic concept is that of *samsara,* the transmigration of souls; rebirth is required by *karma* in order that the consequences of action be fulfilled. Thus the role an individual must play throughout his life is fixed by his good and evil actions in his previous existences. It is only when the individual soul sees beyond the veil of illusion (*maya*)—the force leading to belief in the appearances of things—that it is able to realize its identity with that impersonal, transcendental reality (*brahman*) and escape from the otherwise endless cycle of rebirth to be absorbed into *brahman.* This release is known as *moksha.*

Veneration for the cow has come to be intimately associated with orthodox Hinduism of all sects. Since the cow is regarded as the symbol of motherhood and fruitfulness, the killing of a cow, even accidentally, is regarded as one of the most serious of religious transgressions.

Gods

Hinduism is polytheistic, but in the most important and widely held *darshana,* the Vedanta (End of the Veda), the gods are considered to be merely manifestations or aspects of a single underlying divinity. The three major Hindu gods are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, personifications of creative, preservative and destructive forces, respectively. Almost all Hindus are followers of Vishnu or Shiva or of one of their avatars, or incarnations; followers of Vishnu are called Vaishnavites (Vaisnavas), and followers of Shiva, Shaivites (Shaivas).

The majority of Indian Hindus (except those of northern India and Nepal) are Vaishnavites. Vishnu has ten incarnations in animal and human forms—fish, crocodile, boar, man-lion, dwarf, Rama-with-an-ax, the Rama of the Ramayana, Krishna, and Buddha and, finally, Kalki, or the "incarnation to come." Some Hindus identify Christ with this tenth avatar of Vishnu. The devotional *bhakti* movement, in which a total love and devotion for a personal God suffices for salvation, is prominent in Vaishnavism.

The Hinduism of Nepal is basically Shaivite, although Krishna as well as Shiva is worshiped. Shiva is a more complex divinity than Vishnu. He personifies the awesome and frightening aspects of faith, such as the struggle against demons and evil, the potential dangers of knowledge, and the fact of death and deterioration. But taken as the supreme being, Shiva also has creative and benevolent aspects. He often appears under male and female guises.

Seen as a mother-goddess, Shiva has two aspects, one beneficent as the goddesses Uma and Parvati; the other aspect, more often stern and terrible, as the goddesses Durga, Kali and Bhairavi. The name of the last goddess, Bhairavi, is often loosely used to mean any local community's guardian demoness and is considered a manifestation of Kali the Destroyer, the reminder of mortality, famine and pestilence.

The guardian demons, the Bhairab, are considered to be manifestations of Shiva in his destructive aspect. These male and female demonic deities are propitiated by the villagers under their charge who look to them for protection from all evil chances. They might be regarded as reformed demons who use their power against the forces of evil, rather than against the people.

In his own guise, perhaps Shiva's most venerated forms are Pashupati, who is the Lord of Animals, and Nataraja (the Dancing King), who symbolizes the creative as well as the destructive forces in the universe, which is the product of Shiva's sport. The universe is seen as cyclical, undergoing phases of formation, dissolution and formation anew from chaos. Creation and destruction are seen as two sides of the same coin. Thus, Shiva and his manifestations have both aspects. There are also gods associated with Shiva, such as Karttikeya, the warrior, and Ganesha, the gentle, elephant-headed "master of the troupe of Shiva," who removes great obstacles and is a god of wealth. Ganesha and Karttikeya are Shiva's sons by his wife, Parvati.

Tantrism

In the Shaivite Hinduism of Nepal, great emphasis is placed on worship of the goddess, who is regarded as active in the affairs of the world, while the god is regarded as standing more aloof. This emphasis on female deities derives from Tantrism, whose roots lie in the ancient popular cults of the mother-goddess and of the *linga* (phallic fertility symbol) of pre-Hindu northern India, particularly Bengal. Tantric influence has always been strong in Nepal.

Tantrism began as a movement in the sixth or seventh century A.D. with the compilation of a group of Sanskrit texts often collectively called Tantra (literally, "weavings"). These are divided according to subject matter into four groups—*jnana*, or knowledge; *yoga* (literally "union"), or discipline; *kriya*, or ritual; and *carya*, or conduct—which set forth the philosophy, the regimen of meditation, ceremonial and magical practices, and the code of morality, of the movement.

The Tantric *yoga* is based on the belief that the answer to all religious questions and mysteries can be found within the human body. It affirms that there are solar and lunar currents within the nervous system which, when properly united, make it possible to open the psychic centers (*cakra*) of the body, thus setting free psychic powers which can be used to facilitate union with the absolute, which becomes identified with the world and the cycle of rebirth.

Tantrism was originally conceived as a philosophy and spiritual discipline leading to salvation or liberation which could be followed by persons of any or no religious faith, but it soon became differentiated along sectarian lines, according to whether the believers were Vaishnavites, Shaivites, or simply Tantrists, as well as along religious lines, Hindu and Buddhist. Both Hindu and Buddhist Tantrists accept 84 traditional great Yogis as *rishi* (sage or saint), who are credited with the teaching and spread of the movement and who are believed to have acquired supernormal powers during the course of their strivings for union with the absolute. In some cases, they have acquired the status of divinities. In Nepal, for example, Machendra is regarded by Hindus as the supernatural being who was the *guru* (teacher) or spiritual guide of Gorakhnath, the patron saint of the old Pahari Kingdom of Gorkha and hence of modern Nepal. The Buddhists consider Machendra a reincarnation of Avalokiteshvara, one of the Buddhist deities.

In Hindu Tantrism, the solitary formless transcendental reality (*brahman*) is revealed as personified female (Shakti) and male (Shakta) philosophical principles which are present in all things—gods, spirits, men and material objects. Whereas Shaivism emphasizes the creative and destructive power of the god, Tantric Hinduism stresses the activity of the goddess, relegating the god to a passive role. The goddess is normally the consort of Shiva in one or another of her aspects—Durga, Kali, Parvati, Uma, Devi, Ambika, Bhavani, Mahamaya or Lalita.

While most Tantric Hindus differ little in religious observances from Shaivite Hindus—except for the emphasis on worship of the goddess, the use of animal sacrifice and their reliance on certain scriptural texts —a few belong to a more esoteric type of Tantrism called *vamachara* or "left-hand" Tantrism as opposed to the exoteric *dakhinachara* or "right-hand" Tantrism. It is not known how many "left-hand" Tantrists there are since their religious doctrines require secrecy of worship and make ritualistic sexual intercourse the primary means of achieving liberation for the initiated.

Formal Observances and Practices

Hinduism has priests but no ecclesiastical organization; temples but no church. The only authority is supplied by the Vedic scriptures. Its priests, drawn from the many Brahman castes (*jati*), act as chaplains to families of castes of the first three *varna*. Besides the priests, some persons, who may belong to any caste, withdraw from the world and devote their lives to religion; known as *sannyasi,* they may be independent or may belong to a religious order.

The central act of formal religious behavior is public worship (*puja*), which consists largely of welcoming the god as an honored guest to the company of its worshippers. The image of the deity is bathed, dressed, incensed, worshiped with fire, fed, bedecked with flowers and carried in procession from the temple amid singing of hymns and sacred dancing. For many, perhaps most, of the participants, the idol is the actual god or goddess; for others it is only a symbol of the deity it represents.

The temple which enshrines the image may be a simple village shrine or a large complex of buildings, such as Pashupatinath (the temple of Shiva, Lord of Animals), in the Katmandu Valley, with an elaborate cycle of religious activities. Whatever its size, the temple is dedicated to a particular deity and is served by a permanent staff of priests and attendants.

Worship can be conducted without an idol. Often an icon is substituted, or some attribute of the deity—such as the wheel (*chakra*) of Vishnu or the *linga* (phallic symbol) or trident of Shiva—is used to represent the deity. Some sects of Hinduism, such as Tantrism, use more or less complex geometrical patterns (*mandala*) as well as pictures to symbolize the deities.

Individuals may prepare themselves for either public or private worship with such practices as ceremonial ablutions, fasting, abstinences and other food restrictions, assuming certain postures and gestures of the fingers, breath control and others. Possession by the god is often an important part of worship. Prayer consists of the repeated, silent recitation of a sacred formula (*mantra*). Often many of the syllables of the *mantra* have no meaning. This type of prayer is regarded as an aid to concentration and meditation, as well as a means of bringing about the desired result of protection, expiation or fulfillment of a vow.

Meditation and the study of the sacred *srute* and *smriti* texts are also acts of worship. The only more or less obligatory religious practices are those performed in the home: thrice-daily prayers and offerings to the gods, saints and ancestors. Most people, however, considerably abbreviate these activities. More elaborate periodic ceremonies are held for ancestors back to great-grandparents on both the paternal and maternal sides of the family in order to obtain their protection and assistance and to placate their anger for offenses committed against them.

There are a number of sacramental rites conducted in the home by the family chaplain (*purohit*). They deal with birth, initiation (into the life of the "twice-born" castes), marriage and death. The life-cycle ceremonies marking the high points of an individual's passage from birth to death are observed almost universally in more or less elaborate form. As a general rule, the tendency among the high castes is to simplify and shorten these ceremonies. Among the lower castes, however, elaboration of the rituals and the procurement of a Brahman to officiate at domestic ceremonies are regarded as marks of prestige and advancement in caste status.

There are also a large number of agricultural and commemorative rites and festivals. Some of the more important Hindu festivals (*jatra*) are: Dussera, the 9- or 10-day feast of Durga in early October; Diwali, the Festival of Lights, dedicated to Lakshmi, held in late October; and Holi, usually held in March, the Spring Festival in honor of Krishna. Machendra-jatra, a festival peculiar in Nepal and celebrated by Buddhists as well as Hindus, is held in early June to ensure the monsoon rains.

Pilgrimage is another important religious activity. The shrines of the Katmandu Valley, such as Pashupatinath and even the Buddhist Swayambhunath, and shrines outside the Valley such as Gorakhnath and Muktinath, are well-known places of Hindu pilgrimage. A pilgrimage is often the result of a vow taken to obtain some definite goal or simply to obtain merit in the eyes of the god to whom the vow was made. A vow may also be made to abstain from or to perform various sorts of activities for a definite period of time.

Popular Hinduism

Although many high-caste families throughout Nepal tend to conform to the Hinduism of the Brahman priests and the religious texts, a majority of the people, particularly among the lower castes, are much less orthodox in the gods they worship. The ordinary villager knows relatively little about the concept of the divine unity underlying all things, including the gods. This philosophical notion is reflected in popular religion chiefly in belief in an impersonal force that controls fate.

Each village tends to have its own patron deities. In some cases, connections between these deities and the great deities of the Hindu pantheon can be traced, but the village deities are more often personifications of natural phenomena. Much importance is given to shamanism and to the role of goddesses. While gods are usually responsible for guarding village land and resources, goddesses protect the collective health of the group, especially in respect to epidemics. Both are given public worship under the ministry of the Brahman village priests of the village shrines.

In addition to village deities, there are other divinities—usually ancestral spirits, but sometimes one or another of the great gods of Hinduism—whose worship tends to be handed down within families of lineages as their particular responsibility in order to preserve the health and well-being of the family. The majority of the gods and spirits are worshiped out of fear of their power and wrath rather than out of love.

These beings are very much a part of daily life. They are perceived as bringing difficulty and misfortune in retribution for neglect of the worship due them or for offenses committed against them. Crop failures, accidents, disease, barrenness, persistent family quarrels, even the time, place and manner of death are attributed to their actions. Religion is seen more as a means of placating and propitiating powerful supernatural beings of uncertain temper than as being concerned with offering thanks and devotion to deities of lovable and beneficent guise. There seems to be no feeling that it is necessary to worship a god who does not cause trouble.

BUDDHISM

Buddhism has its origin in the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, a prince of the Kshatriya *varna,* who was born in what is now the Nepalese Tarai about 563 B.C. His father was the ruler of a minor Indian principality, but Gautama renounced worldly life at the age of 29 and spent the next 6 years in meditation. At the end of this time he attained enlightenment; thereafter, known as the Buddha, or the "Enlightened One," he devoted the remainder of his life to preaching his doctrine.

The Buddha accepted or reinterpreted the basic concepts of Hinduism, such as *karma, samsara, dharma* and *moksha,* but generally refused to commit himself on specific metaphysical theories, saying they were essentially irrelevant to his teachings and could only distract attention from them. He was specifically interested in restoring a concern with morality to religious life, which had become stifled in ritual details, external observances and legalisms.

Buddha's Teachings

The Four Noble Truths summarize the Buddha's analysis of the human situation and the solution he found for the problems of life. The first truth is that life, lived in a world of unceasing change, is inherently imperfect and sorrowful and that misery is not merely a result of occasional frustration of desire or of misfortune, but is a quality permeating all experience. The second truth is that the cause of sorrow is desire, the emotional involvement with existence which leads from rebirth to rebirth through the operation of *karma.* The third truth is that the sorrow can be ended by eliminating desire. The fourth truth sets forth the Eightfold Path leading to elimination of desire, rebirth and sorrow and to the attainment of *nirvana.* It enjoins right or perfect understanding, aspiration, speech, action, livelihood, effort, thought and contemplation.

Nirvana, the goal of the path, is the extinction of desire, hate and the illusion of selfhood. *Nirvana* is essentially a state of mystical union with the absolute or World Soul, but it is not an individual soul which attains it. For the Buddhist, there are no immortal particular souls; there is only the World Soul, in which all beings, both animate and inanimate, are participants. Thus, enlightenment is the realization of the identity of the self with the absolute. Similarly, it is not a particular identity or ego which undergoes rebirth, but a growing bundle of *karmic* merits and demerits which constitute a character rather than a personality.

Schools

After Buddha's death (about 483 B.C.), Buddhism was institutionalized in the monastic order of his disciples; his teachings were initially transmitted orally by them. Various versions of the basic texts of the religion, the Tripitaka (Three Baskets), were written down by the early Buddhist monks between the third century B.C. and the seventh century A.D., but except for the Pali-language texts of Theravada Buddhism, most have not survived in their entirety. Subsequent centuries brought a large body of commentaries and additions to the basic texts.

The doctrines of Buddha underwent much recasting and transformation in the centuries following his death, and eventually these changes resulted in the formation of a new school known as the Mahayana (Greater Vehicle) as differentiated from the Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle) —a somewhat derogatory name given by Mahayana Buddhists to the earlier form. Both existed side by side in India for several centuries, with Mahayana gradually gaining greater favor and then being displaced, in the eighth century, by a third school. This, much influenced by Tantrism, was taught in certain Indian monasteries and carried by Buddhist missionaries to Nepal, where it became deeply entrenched. It is known as the Thunderbolt or Diamond Career (Vajrayana).

Hinayana

Hinayana, the earliest form of Buddhism, offered liberation from rebirth only to those who renounced the world for a life of monastic discipline. For those who could not or would not adopt such a life, it counseled morality and nonviolence. It did not attempt to replace earlier religious beliefs but, instead, supplemented them, by showing that man's spiritual destiny was not dependent upon the whims of powerful supernatural beings but was under his own control for better or worse.

The only surviving form of Hinayana is the Theravada Buddhism of Ceylon and Southeast Asia. It continues to emphasize the central importance of individual effort and total self-reliance in the search for *nirvana*. Its full realization in practice requires the individual to renounce the world and resolutely set out on a course of self-discipline and self-mastery for the attainment of *nirvana,* without regard to the actions of others. The man who has followed his solitary path to *nirvana* is called an *arhat.* His example may inspire others, but, having escaped the cycle of rebirth, he can give those in it no direct help.

Mahayana

Mahayana, the branch of Buddhism that developed from Hinayana about the beginning of the Christian era, offered a different spiritual ideal based more on the example of Buddha than on his specific statements. It emphasized the fundamental oneness of all beings, from which it follows that the liberation from rebirth (*samsara*) of any particular being is incomplete until all beings have achieved this liberation, just as a man cannot be said to be in perfect health until all parts of his body are in perfect health.

Mahayana also developed the doctrine of the cosmic Buddha (Adi-Buddha), corresponding to the absolute or World Soul of the Hindus. In this doctrine the historical Buddha becomes only one of the incarnations of the transcendental or cosmic Buddha, which is regarded as manifesting itself in all periods and in innumerable worlds for the salvation of all sentient beings.

The Mahayana concept of the Bodhisattva (a being destined for Buddhahood) follows logically from this doctrine. A Bodhisattva is an individual being who, having attained the goal of self-purification and emancipation, refuses to enter *nirvana* out of compassion for those beings who have not attained an equal stage of spiritual growth. Recognizing his essential identity with them, his happiness is incomplete until they are able to share it.

Vajrayana

In Vajrayana, an offshoot of Mahayana Buddhism, Buddhist and Hindu philosophical thought became very similar. Vajrayana contrasts with Mahayana in its emphasis on Tantric religious symbolism and on Tantrism as an advanced, esoteric discipline for the attainment of *nirvana.* They do not differ, however, in basic beliefs.

Vajrayana adds to the Buddhas and the principal Bodhisattvas of Mahayana five female divinities (*shakti* or *tara*), who are popularly regarded as the consorts of the five principal Buddhas; the Bodhisattvas are thought of as their sons. The images of each of the five "families" are distinguished by a particular color: blue, yellow, white, red or green. Thus, the blue Akshobhya Buddha is "married" to the blue Lochana Tara and their "son" is the blue Vajrapani Bodhisattva, the Thunderbolt-bearer. The red Amitabha Buddha is grouped with Pandara Tara and Padmapani (or Avalokiteshvara) Bodhisattva, who was incarnated as Siddhartha Gautama, the historical founder of Buddhism. All the deities of this pantheon are merely aspects, or emanations, of the ultimate Adi-Buddha, the Body of Essence (Dharmakaya) in which all things are participations.

Vajrayana, as a separate branch of Buddhism, appears to persist today only among the Newar of the Katmandu Valley. Its practices are distinct from those of other Buddhists in the country, who are primarily adherents to the Tibetan Buddhism which developed as a variant of Vajrayana.

Newar monasteries were originally communities of celibate monks. During centuries of Hinduization they became dwelling places (*baha*) for various patrilineal lineages of the Gubhaju and Bare castes whose ancestry goes back to the early monks who ceased to be celibate and founded families. The *baha* buildings generally enclose a central courtyard and contain one or more shrines. Although each *baha* is autonomous in many respects, one lineage in each of the major towns supplies its senior man to act as head of the entire caste group in the town and, in annual consultation with the heads of each *baha*, to discuss and judge disputes that have arisen within the caste.

Gubhaju and Bare were originally higher and lower monastic ranks, respectively, and their relative status has been preserved in that of the contemporary castes. A reminder of the earlier monastic life of the *baha* remains in what was formerly the rite of ordination as a monk of the Bare grade. All boys, Gubhaju as well as Bare, must undergo this ritual. For 4 days afterward, the boys are sent out to collect alms in the manner of mendicant monks. Gubhaju boys subsequently advance to a higher ritual status in a ceremony called the Coronation of the Learned One. In it they are given the insignia of a priest, a headdress, a prayer bell and a brass *vajra*, the thunderbolt symbol of power. This ceremony qualifies them to direct public worship and to conduct private religious rites as chaplains for client families.

The Bare man is not authorized to perform such functions, although, like any man from a clean caste, he can renounce the world and become a celibate monk, wearing the yellow robe and conducting services for the worship of Buddha and the deities borrowed from Hinduism. He cannot, however, conduct the important Hindu-derived sacramental rites of the life-cycle ceremonies dealing with birth, caste-initiation, marriage and death. Celibate monasticism has reappeared among the Newar relatively recently and probably reflects the influence of Buddhist monastic pilgrims from other countries during the past century.

An optional third ritual for adolescent boys of both Bare and Gubhaju castes is the "giving of the sacred formulae," at which the candidates are instructed in certain magical formulas (*mantra*) and become entitled to participate in Tantric observances. The ceremony, which includes a 10-day feast, is very expensive, and families will often share the cost of a single joint ceremony for their sons.

Tibetan Buddhism

Buddhism appears to have received official recognition as the state religion of Tibet in the second quarter of the seventh century, when a Tibetan king, Srong-bstan Sgam-po, is said to have married two Buddhist wives, one Chinese and one Nepalese (Newar), and to have been converted to Buddhism by them. Srong bstan sgam po's minister, Sambhota, brought the Vajrayana Buddhist scriptures and is credited with inventing the Tibetan alphabet so that the Sanskrit texts could be translated.

About A.D. 747, the monk Padmasambhava and his disciples were invited to Tibet from their monastery in Bihar to convert the Tibetans from their shamanistic beliefs. He and his disciples taught Tantric (Vajrayana) Buddhism and established the Nyingmapa Order of Monks. This order of monks survived the persecution instituted by the followers of Bon, the indigenous shamanistic religion, in the tenth century.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries other monastic orders were founded, some heavily influenced by Bon theories and practices. These and the earlier Nyingmapa, came to be called "Red Hats" from the color of their headgear and to distinguish them from the monks of the Gelugpa Order (founded in the fourteenth century), who were known as the "Yellow Hats."

The Gelugpa Order soon became the most important and powerful order of Tibetan Buddhism, supplying both the Dalai and Panchen Lamas. It is, however, the Tantric unreformed and semireformed ("Red Hat") orders, particularly the Kagyutpa, which predominate in the Buddhism of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. In general the Tibetans follow the Hinayana rules of monastic discipline (Vinaya) and dogmatic psychology (Abhidhamma), the Mahayana philosophy and spiritual goals, and the Vajrayana symbolism and esoteric forms of meditation.

The typical Buddhist monastery (*gompa*) in Tibet is a complex of connected structures built around a courtyard in a way which often suggests a fortress or a castle. Containing a temple or temples, chapels, classrooms, meeting halls, dormitories and a kitchen, a *gompa* may house several thousand persons. Drepung, in Lhasa, one of the largest in Tibet, is said at one time to have had nearly 8,000 ordained monks and lay clergy—but most are considerably smaller.

The appearance and organization of monasteries in Nepal vary from one Buddhist group to another, but by comparison with the Tibetan model they tend to be small and, as religious communities, less institutionally integrated. Thus, among the Sherpa the monastery is characteristically a collection of dormitory huts around a temple, each hut accommodating one or two persons. The monks prepare their food in a common kitchen and gather in the temple for religious services.

The monastery usually bears only those expenses connected with religious observances—such as the purchase of tea, beer and the butter for lamps—and the monk must provide his own food, clothing and other needs. Most of them are dependent upon the alms of laymen. Frequently, a wealthy layman undertakes to support a monk or nun in order to obtain both religious merit and social prestige. When a man becomes a monk, he is usually given his inheritance in money which he can then lend out at interest in order to pay for his expenses. Laymen also provide alms and donations in cash and kind for monks who conduct private religious services for them at marriages, funerals and other times of family crisis.

Although the larger and more prosperous Tamang communities have temples, residential monasteries are relatively rare. The monks who live in them are celibate. Outside such monastic communities, however, local temples are served by married religious functionaries who support themselves largely by farming and animal husbandry. There is a tendency for such clerical families to intermarry and to raise their sons in the religious vocation. Any family able to afford the expense, however, can send a son to a learned monk for training for a clerical career.

SHAMANISM

Shamanism, widespread in Asia, is the belief in the ability of certain persons—shamans—to communicate with and make known the wishes and intentions of a wide variety of supernatural beings. Common throughout Nepal, in some areas it overshadows both orthodox Hinduism and Buddhism in popular belief and practice. Indeed, all Nepalese ethnic groups, Hindu as well as Buddhist, have shamans (*jhankri* in Nepali).

Shamanism is a means of dealing with the practical problems of daily life, especially misfortune and illness. Hinduism and Buddhism, on the other hand, as formal doctrines focus more on the nature of existence and the meaning and goals of life. The average villager, little concerned with the abstract and preoccupied with mundane wants and needs, sees little or no conflict in adhering to shamanistic beliefs and practices as well as the two major religions, and one of the strengths of shamanism among the people is its close association with health and healing. A large number of illnesses are ascribed to the action of supernatural beings. Only the shaman can determine which being is the cause in particular cases. He may prescribe herbal remedies as well as rituals designed to placate the offended spirit, but often he merely diagnoses the cause of the illness and leaves the treatment to local practitioners of folk medicine. Public worship, or *puja,* is often an important element in the treatment.

Gods and spirits wishing to communicate their desires to villagers do so through the shaman by temporarily entering his person. Among Tibeto-Nepalese groups, the spirits that possess the shaman and whom he propitiates usually are not those of the Buddhist pantheon, but may be indigenous, pre-Buddhist mountain gods, spirits of diseases, ancestral spirits or even local deities borrowed from popular Hinduism. In addition to the Buddhist lamas, the Tamang village usually has one or more *dhami,* or shamans, who conduct seasonal agricultural rites, propitiate the gods and spirits with animal sacrifices, and honor the ancestral spirits of a clan. The *dhami* usually inherits his office. The *fedangma* of the Limbu and the *bijuwa* of the Rai appear to play similar roles. The Tharu shaman, if he is willing to accept the responsibility, may offer periodic sacrifices to the goddess Bhawani and her sisters to keep the village free of evil and malicious spirits in addition to his work with the individual patients made ill by them.

Bon is the product of the impact of Buddhism on Tibetan shamanism, which, in order to maintain its position, systematically reorganized itself among Buddhist lines. It accepted *karma* and *nirvana* and many other concepts, elaborated a pantheon and established monasteries like those of the Buddhists. It rewrote the Buddhist scriptures and attributed them to a mythical founder, Shem-rab. These scriptures, totaling 300 volumes, were divided into two collections called, like those of the Tibetan Buddhists, the Kanjur and Tanjur.

Despite its efforts to survive and its own influence on Tibetan Buddhism, Bon has vanished from many parts of Tibet, being found mainly in the border regions. It also has a limited distribution in Sikkim, Bhutan and northern Nepal. Some writers suggest that much that appears to be Tibetan Buddhism in Nepal is actually Bon.

OTHER RELIGIONS

The 1952–54 national census indicated that approximately 209,000 Moslems lived in Nepal. Of these, over 200,000 were concentrated in the Eastern, Midwestern and Farwestern Tarai. Small communities of Moslems are, however, found in other parts of the country, and some of these had been established long enough to acquire agricultural land. As in India, Nepalese Moslems are involved with the caste system.

The 1952–54 census indicated that fewer than 1,000 persons were Christians or of unknown religious affiliation. The exclusion of foreigners, first instituted by Prithvi Narayan Shah (r., 1742–75) and retained by all succeeding governments until 1951, was directed principally at Westerners and at missionaries in particular. Missionaries, as such, still continue to be denied entry, and the Constitution explicitly forbids any effort to convert persons from one religion to another. The government, however, does permit various Christian churches to operate schools and staff medical missions, and one Christian church has been built in Katmandu to serve the foreign community and the small number of Nepalese Christians.

CHAPTER 10

SOCIAL VALUES

Social values vary from group to group in the multiethnic society of Nepal. The Buddhist farmer and stockbreeder of the high Himalayas and the ricegrowing Hindu peasant of the Tarai differ not only in language, customs and environmental circumstance but in their conception of the nature of reality and in what they regard as normal and abnormal, desirable and undesirable in human affairs. Even within a single ethnic group, differences in respect to urban and rural residence, economic status and education carry with them diverse ways of thinking and feeling, and such differences have been sharpened in the local and regional isolation created by mountainous terrain and poor communications.

Uniformities and elements of integration, however, are not absent. Most Nepalese, for example, are subsistence farmers, and through their cultural differences run the common denominators of village life and the agricultural round. The political ferment of the 1950's and the continuing impact of a central government under a monarch determined to rule directly and vigorously have produced the beginnings of a public sense of national identity and shared goals. Only a minority as yet enjoy the advantages of formal education, but an expanding public school system is gradually disseminating basic elements of knowledge and common attitudes throughout the country. Hinduism and Buddhism are sharply contrasting religious dispensations, but in Nepal they have largely submerged an old substratum of highly varied shamanist belief. Moreover, certain shared concepts in the two religions reveal both their common Indian origin and their extensive mutual borrowing and interpenetration.

Most broadly, Nepalese social values can be seen in terms of one major contrast and a number of shared orientations. The contrast is between the values associated with Hinduism and Indian-derived culture patterns and those associated with Buddhism and Tibetan cultural connections. The shared orientations are reflected in certain values characteristic of the Hindus or the Buddhists, or common to both. Such an approach reveals little of the actual variation of values in Nepal's pluralistic social setting. It does suggest something of the range of variation and indicate some general value orientations.

The contrasts between Nepalese Hinduism and Buddhism tend to be softened by the ways in which each has been influenced by the other. The Buddhists, in particular, have accommodated to the numerically and politically dominant Hindus, assimilating Hindu deities to the

Buddhist pantheon and adjusting in various ways to the caste system. Both religions accept the notion of a cycle of reincarnation or rebirth in higher or lower forms depending on merit gained or lost in earlier existences and, for those who have acquired sufficient merit, ultimate release from rebirth and union with the infinite. For Hindus and Buddhists alike, charity, honesty, moderation and abstention from taking life are prime merits. The two sectors differ significantly, however, in the way in which each has translated these and other general ideals into a pattern of individual feeling and conduct and group relations.

The Hindu caste system stratifies the community on a scale of ritual purity. Theoretically, each caste is a hermetically sealed compartment, shut out from those above whom it would pollute, and shutting out those below who would pollute it. The system in India, and especially in Nepal, has fallen short of this logical rigor, but it has had definite consequences in the realm of social values. Thus, the Hindu preoccupation with trespass against a multitude of ritual boundaries has tended to overshadow moral principles with legalistic rules. The standard of right and wrong is not universal but relative to status, and the same act may be good or bad, depending upon the caste of the person involved. Concern is with the social rather than the personal effects of conduct. Ritual pollution, for example, is contagious, the violator of caste rules transmitting his impurity to all who come in contact with him. The family finds protection by subordinating its members to the family head and, in effect, alienating their individual ethical competence to him.

Within limits, caste boundaries are, in fact, overlooked in the daily intercourse of all but the most orthodox, and there are other rungs on the status ladder than those of caste. In tendency, however, the system blocks upward movement in the community with hereditary impediments, while leaving open the way to the loss of status through ritual pollution. The outcome in terms of value orientation and temperament has been a defensive concern for status, an indifference to the affairs of those outside one's immediate circle, an impersonal quality in dealing with others, and a pervasive pessimism. In the Hindu tradition, the only real escape from caste is in renunciation of the world for the ascetic life of the holy mendicant (*sannyasi*). This alternative, however, involving, as it does, withdrawal from the responsibilities of family and caste elicits only ambivalent approval.

The Buddhists are ethnically even more varied than are the much more numerous Hindus. Some, like certain Bhote groups in the North do not differ in culture from Tibetans across the adjacent frontier. Others—especially the Buddhist section of the Newar—have developed highly distinctive patterns of their own. Through all this variation Buddhism in part conditions and in part corresponds with a value complex which, in contrast to that of the Hindus, owes more to Tibet than to India. The Buddhist communities—again with the exception of the Newar—are not organized on caste lines, and the absence of this elaborate and rigid compartmentalization of society has favored the acceptance of certain basic Buddhist principles. In place of the exclusiveness of caste, for example, there is the universalistic Buddhist belief in the brotherhood of man and a concept of right and wrong which is independent of social status. An act is judged to be good or bad without regard to the social position of the one who commits it. Hospitality, kindness, and respect for others are held to be meritorious in all circumstances, and the estranging idea of ritual pollution is absent.

Moral worth for the Buddhists tends to be an attribute of the individual rather than of the group, and responsibility to be personal rather than collective. Value focus shifts accordingly. Buddhists and Hindus alike accord considerable importance to the efficacy of prayer and ritual acts in the acquisition of merit, and both formally acknowledge largely the same cardinal virtues. However, whereas the most fundamental obligations of the Hindu are dictated by caste status and family affiliation, the Buddhist is expected to be guided by universal principles applicable in the relations of all men, irrespective of birth. The contrast is between Hindu particularism, collective responsibility, concern with group status and emphasis on enforcement of roles, on the one hand, and on Buddhist universalism, individual responsibility, concern with personal relationships, and emphasis on internalized sanctions, on the other. In terms of emotional texture of community life, the difference in these two value configurations seems to be reflected among the Buddhists in less formality and tension, in an emphasis on restraint over assertiveness, in a more sanguine and cheerful outlook and in a greater readiness to form new friendships.

A central point of value in literally all groups is knowledge. Formal knowledge, traditionally associated in Nepal with Hindu and Buddhist scriptures, has acquired for the Nepalese a sacred quality. Not only was the pursuit of knowledge virtuous, but its possession brought power. These two attributes still strongly adhere to knowledge—secular as well as religious—but with an apparent difference of emphasis in the Hindu and Buddhist sectors of the society.

The Buddhist disposition is to treat knowledge as virtue. The sanctity of the Lamaist monk is enhanced by learning, and, although there are many poorly educated monks, the ability to read and recite the *sutras* is a prestigious mark of the religious vocation. The end of knowledge is seen to be virtue and spiritual enlightenment, and, while it is held that knowledge is not the only or even sufficient path to these, means and end have in effect come to be identified. Something of this attitude carries over into the respect in which modern learning is held and accompanies the practical motives in the eagerness of parents to obtain an education for their children.

Knowledge for similar reasons has a connotation of virtue among Hindus, but for them it has no less clearly an attribute of power. This perception of knowledge no doubt owes something of Tantric influence, which in Nepal has penetrated both Hinduism and Buddhism. In its more esoteric forms, Tantrism claims a body of occult knowledge capable of releasing great cosmic and psychic forces. Knowledge as power, however, would seem more importantly to result from caste-defined Brahman domination of orthodox religious learning and of the high castes' general monopoly of the secular and religious knowledge needed to rule. Knowledge, in effect, became not merely a benefit of birth and wealth but a hereditary asset, vital to the preservation of high status, like ritual purity itself, and not to be shared with those below or with potential competitors lest the advantage be lost. This attitude was reflected in the antipathy of the Ranas to the development of popular education. The policy changed with the fall of the Ranas, and public schools have increased rapidly. The old attitudes, however, have not altogether disappeared, and the evaluation of knowledge as power still carries with it the tendency to hoard it as alienable treasure.

Hierarchy and authority stand out in the pattern of Nepalese social life. The caste system carries the hierarchical principle to an extreme, and only in modern times has an absolutist tradition of public authority encountered an opposing concept of popular and private right. The hierarchical and authoritarian emphasis is greatest in the Hindu sector of the society, but in lesser degree it is also present among some Buddhist groups in an hereditary division of the Tibetan type between aristocrats and commoners and in the penetration of Hindu influence.

The hierarchical ordering of all the most important relationships in the Hindu community has given special importance to formal attitudes and types of social behavior calculated to recognize and preserve a wide range of status difference. The appropriate postures in the dealings of superiors and inferiors are dignity and distance on the part of those above, and respect and submissiveness on the part of those below. This pattern finds expression within the family circle itself, all members of which are expected to subordinate themselves to the final authority of the male head and to be governed in their relations with each other by an order of precedence which ranks males above females, age above youth and lineal above affinal kinsmen.

The formalization of individual and group relationships within the restrictive hereditary structure of caste has made for certain conflicts between the real and the ideal. In the traditional ideal, the individual accepts without complaint or envy the place to which he has been born.

Actually, a frustrated preoccupation with status appears to be general. It has evidently been sharpened by the fact that the nature of the caste system tends to restrict opportunities for advancement to competition for relative position among one's peers. The less privileged constantly seek ways of advancement, and, although they have little hope of being assimilated into groups above them, they adopt their ways as far as possible to display superiority over their fellows. Wealth is no doubt desired for the security and comfort it can bring, but a central motive appears to be elevation of social position. Even the semblance of wealth is prized, and people will entertain lavishly and mark family occasions with expensive ceremonies at the cost of mounting debts.

Unquestioning obedience to authority is also a qualified ideal not only because of the impingement of modern influences but because of an apparent traditional factor. The characteristic relationship between persons of high and low caste has been that of patron and client. Service and obedience were expected of the client, but the patronage he received came less as a right or a reciprocal favor than as an alms-like bounty. The pattern gave little reinforcement to the motive of loyalty between superior and subordinate, and such relationships have tended to be unstable. The result has been that while the principle of authority has been strongly upheld, there has been little compunction about ignoring or avoiding its commands.

A warrior tradition has given value to courage and strength among the Nepalese, especially the hill peoples. The kingdom was won by the military prowess of the Thakuri and Chetri castes of Gorkha, and the more or less Hinduized ethnic groups of central and eastern Nepal subsequently created a legend in the ranks of the Gurkha battalions in the service of Great Britain and India. The high Himalayas have also provided the setting for a hardy mountaineering tradition. The "Tiger" Sherpa is a man with the distinction of having served as a porter at elevations above 24,000 feet. Not only men, but women, take pride in their ability to carry heavy loads over steep and often dangerous mountain trails.

Contact with the outside world and a planned program of domestic development are beginning to affect the traditional scheme of values. Such changes as are observable are most apparent in the few urban centers, and notably the Katmandu Valley, but there are indications that new material expectations, social wants and political goals are penetrating the rural areas as well. The impact of change is differential also in that it is felt first by men and young people. Frequently, the old and new concepts come into conflict within the same household, the older women clinging to tradition, while the young people and men, whose contacts reach outside the household, begin to accept newer ways.

Western influence entering Nepal through motion pictures, radio, printed matter and Nepalese who have traveled abroad and resident foreigners is affecting traditional concepts of family and caste. More and more frequently sons are setting up their own households before the death of their father, and even though brothers may continue to live in their father's house, they are less apt than formerly to pool their earnings in the joint family purse. Western notions of courtship and marriage are beginning to compete with the traditional concept of family-arranged matches.

Caste rules are also loosening, and the penalties for intercaste marriage have been abolished and discrimination before the law on the basis of caste banned. As family and caste traditions are challenged, the existing forms of status become less satisfying. Recognition of the material abundance of other countries can be expected to give a new significance to wealth and to stimulate the desire for economic advancement and for the knowledge and the social and political institutions with which to achieve it.

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SECTION II. POLITICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 11

CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT

The monarchy has traditionally been the central feature in constitutional theory, and its actual position and power in the governmental process usually have been faithful reflections of its formal authority. Even during the Rana period when the king was under the domination of his prime minister, he remained the exclusive object of the allegiance of the people and the sole source of legitimate power; all actions of the government continued to be taken in his name. With the disintegration of the Rana system of rule in 1951 the monarchy was restored to practical as well as theoretical supremacy. It has remained paramount since that time, even though the constitutional order and the governmental system have undergone three successive transformations: a period of interim party governments under royal tutelage from 1951 to 1959; a period of parliamentary democracy in 1959–60; and a period of *panchayat* rule which began in 1963.

King Mahendra's avowed purpose in creating the new *panchayat* system was the democratization of government by decentralizing the administration and by bringing the mass of the people into participation in economic development and public affairs. This liberalization of the context of government and politics is to take place through a series of class organizations and deliberative bodies arranged on four tiers—village and town, district, zone and national—whose membership at the lowest level includes the whole citizenry. It appears, however, that another and more fundamental objective of the King is to employ the *panchayat* system as a vehicle for broadening and strengthening the position of the monarchy. To a degree these objectives are mutually exclusive, and in their pursuit King Mahendra confronts the dilemma of how to allow the *panchayats* sufficient autonomy to develop into viable institutions without generating forces which might eventually erode monarchical authority.

The imperatives of dealing with this problem are largely responsible for the present outlines of governmental structure, particularly the structure of territorial administration. The King is in thorough control of the apparatus of the central government. Subordinate to it is a traditional administrative system which has been in existence for over half a century and which contains the essential machinery for maintaining royal power throughout the country. With the introduction of the *panchayat* system, a new administrative structure under a degree of popular control was created alongside the first. It was immediately vested with limited administrative responsibilities for economic development and the scope of its authority was to be expanded as conditions warranted. Although the functions of the *panchayats* and their administrative arms overlap those of the traditional administrative system at many points, either implicitly or overtly, it is probable that the older system will remain in operation for quite some time despite its conflicts with the new one. It is doubtful that the King will be willing to extend larger powers to the *panchayats* until their political impact on the country, and particularly their effect on monarchical influence, can be determined with greater certainty. In the meantime, he will probably tolerate the conflicts and disorganization within the government which this duality will engender in order to retain the authority of the traditional administrative system.

King Mahendra has not yet allowed any significant amount of his power or authority to pass to the new institutions of the *panchayat* system, and the immediate effect of its introduction and the eventual direction of its development are still ambiguous. It could eventually result in a freer climate of government. It may, however, rechannel old political forces in new directions and trigger new ones which could threaten the King or lead to the destruction of the system itself. Or, it might remain simply an appurtenance to the present structure of royal control.

CONSTITUTION

The constitutions, of which there have been four, have as their most prominent feature the definition of a strong central authority—the prime minister in the constitution prepared under the Ranas in 1948, and the king in the organic laws of 1951, 1959 and 1962. An accompanying characteristic has been the attempt on the part of monarchs and prime ministers to reconcile their desire to perpetuate the concentration of power in their hands with the demands of political leaders and groups for greater participation in the governmental process.

Each of the four constitutions represents a different response of the rulers to the problem of dealing with such pressures without surrendering the substance of their power. Constitutions since the end of the Rana period have thus been in the nature of periodic balance sheets in the rivalries between the king and the limited number of people involved in the country's political life.

Since 1951 the monarchy has been extremely successful in maintaining possession of the basic elements of power by relinquishing some of the forms but none of the essence of its authority. The constitutions appear to have lacked any widespread knowledge, interest or support from the general public. The *panchayat* system created in 1962 by the most recent constitution was reportedly accorded an unenthusiastic popular reception. However, mass support for the new constitutional system may be generated through its provisions for the participation of all citizens in local assemblies.

Background

The constitutional foundation of Rana rule was contained in royal edicts of 1846 and 1856 which transferred to the prime minister all the powers of absolute monarchy and put the office of prime minister under the exclusive control of the Rana family. The system thus established remained intact for over a century before growing opposition to the Ranas caused Prime Minister Padma Shamsher to initiate certain liberal reforms through the promulgation of the country's first formal constitution, the Government of Nepal Act of 1948. The Constitution of 1948, known as the Rana Constitution, provided for establishment of a bicameral legislative body. The entire membership of one house and a majority of the other was to be selected by the prime minister, who could reject any measure which the legislature might pass. There was to be a Cabinet of at least five men, of whom at least two were to be chosen from among the few elected members of the legislature.

The Act also specified that a *panchayat* system of local self-government was to be inaugurated in the villages, towns and districts. Moreover, it enumerated certain "fundamental rights and duties" which included, among others, freedom of speech, the press, assembly and worship; equality before the law; free elementary education for all; and equal and universal suffrage. Despite the appearance of reform the alterations made in the Rana system by the Constitution were slight and its essential features were preserved without change. However, it was regarded as a dangerous precedent by the more conservative Ranas, who forced Padma to resign and suspend promulgation of the Constitution. It was later put into effect in September 1950, but remained in force only until February 1951, when the Rana monopoly was broken and the creation of a new constitutional system began.

In April 1951, 2 months after the capitulation of the Ranas, King Tribhuvan promulgated a new constitution which ratified the end of the authority of the prime minister and the entire system which surrounded him and asserted the resumption of supreme executive, legislative and judicial power by the king. The Constitution of 1951, entitled the "Interim Government of Nepal Act of 1951," outlined the form of an interim government which was "to create conditions, as early as possible, for holding elections for the Constituent Assembly which will frame a Constitution for Nepal." The king was to exercise his executive power through, and be aided and advised by, a Council of Ministers which he would appoint and which would serve at his pleasure.

The King was also to appoint an Advisory Assembly to sit until the

Constituent Assembly was elected. Its members were to be selected from among the prominent citizens of the country in order "to obtain a greater participation of the representatives of the people in the administration." The king retained "sovereign and plenary" legislative powers, however, and the Advisory Assembly was authorized only to discuss matters, with certain important exceptions, and to recommend measures to the king for enactment into law. The king could reject any bill approved by the Assembly and, although the Constitution stated that a measure had to be discussed and voted on by the Assembly before promulgation by the king as law, it also allowed the king discretionary authority to override the Assembly's disapproval of a bill.

The Constitution also established a supreme court, made the king supreme commander of the armed forces, and contained a section on "Directive Principles of State Policy" which reiterated and enlarged upon the fundamental rights included in the Rana Constitution and added numerous social and economic objectives of the government.

Although the Constitution of 1951 was expected at the time to remain in effect only temporarily pending the election of a Constituent Assembly and the preparation of a permanent organic law, it remained in operation for 9 years. The most significant aspect of the document which superseded it, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal of 1959, was that it was granted by the king rather than drawn up by elected representatives of the people as had been specified in the Constitution of 1951. Although it formally brought into being a democratically elected parliamentary system under a constitutional monarchy, the manner in which the new constitution was enacted indicated clearly that the king retained ultimate sovereignty, even though this was not explicitly stated in the document itself.

The Constitution of 1959 provided that the executive power was vested in the king and that he was to be advised and assisted in its exercise by a Council of State and a Council of Ministers (Cabinet). The Council of State was to consist of officers of Parliament, ministers ex officio, former ministers, and royal appointees and was to advise the monarch on legislation and to handle the details of regency and succession in the event of his death or disability. The general direction and control of the government was entrusted to the Council of Ministers. It was to be headed by a prime minister who was required to command a majority in the lower house of Parliament, to which the Council was collectively responsible.

The Constitution of 1959 provided that the king was to be an integral part of the legislative arm of the government; Parliament was defined as consisting of the king; a House of Representatives, consisting of 109 popularly elected members; and a Senate, composed of 36 members of whom half were elected by the House and half were nominated by the king. All bills approved by the two houses required the assent of the king to become law.

The Constitution granted the king wide latitude for nullifying the operation of the parliamentary system which it introduced. He could suspend the operation of the Cabinet and exercise its functions himself upon determination that no person could command a majority in the House as prime minister. In the event of a "breakdown" of the parliamentary system or of any one of a number of emergency conditions, he could suspend either or both houses of Parliament, assume their powers, and suspend the Constitution in whole or part. At the end of 1960, King Mahendra invoked these emergency powers to dissolve the Koirala government, and in effect the constitutional system which prevailed before 1959 was returned to operation.

Constitution of 1962

The Constitution of Nepal of 1962 was granted by King Mahendra on December 16, 1962, and contained a stronger and more explicit statement of royal authority than any previous constitution. It also established a new structure of government—the four-level *panchayat* system.

The section of the Constitution on "Fundamental Rights and Duties" stated that the principal duties of a citizen were "to be faithful to the nation and loyal to the state," and "to enjoy his rights with due respect for all and without encroaching upon the rights of others." All citizens were guaranteed equal protection of the law, and in the application of the law and appointment to public service there was to be no discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste or tribe. No person was to be deprived of life, liberty or property except in accordance with the law.

The right to hold property and to move and reside in any part of the country was granted, as were freedoms of speech, assembly and religion, although the conversion of one person to a different religion by another was forbidden. Ex post facto laws, double jeopardy, and self-incrimination were prohibited. All persons arrested for any offense were to be informed of the grounds therefor as soon as possible and were not to be denied the right to consult and be defended by a "legal practitioner." No citizen was to be expelled from the country, and traffic in human beings, slavery and forced labor were forbidden. However, laws could be enacted to "restrict or control" the exercise of these fundamental rights if required by the public interest for any one of a long list of possible reasons.

The "Principles and Objectives of Social Policy" of the Constitution stated that the objective of the state was:

> To promote public welfare through the establishment and preservation of a just social system by bringing about, with a broadbased national outlook, the unification and assimilation of the interests of various classes and professions and by bringing about a uniformity in national life.

Although a citizen could not force their implementation by litigation, the government committed itself to the adoption of policies which would, in the words of the Constitution:

> . . . provide equal facilities and opportunities to all citizens for the development of individual personality and for economic betterment;
>
> provide necessary and adequate means of livelihood to its citizens;
>
> ensure such ownership and control of material property in society as will result in the collective welfare through an equitable distribution of wealth and will, at the same time, provide a proper protection and encouragement to private enterprise in the appropriate spheres of industries and commerce;
>
> ensure that the tender years of children as also the health and strength of laboring classes—male and female—will not be misused;
>
> ensure psychological and economic security to orphans, infants, the aged and women in the family way;
>
> do away with such civil practices as polygamy, child marriage and untouchability; and,
>
> introduce, as soon as possible, free and compulsory primary education.

THE KING

In accord with the Constitution of 1962, the monarchy is the sole source of authority and all other governmental institutions are dependent upon it for whatever power they possess. The Constitution—bestowed by the king—states that:

> The Sovereignty of Nepal is vested in His Majesty and the executive, legislative and judicial powers emanate from him. Keeping in view the highest traditions of the Shah dynasty and the welfare and desires of the people, His Majesty shall exercise these powers through bodies provided by this Constitution and the other laws for the time being in force.

The king selects, summons and presides over the Council of State. He appoints the chairman and other members of the Council of Ministers, which is responsible only to him and not to the legislature. He is Supreme Commander of the armed forces. He summons and prorogues the National Panchayat and appoints its presiding officer and 15 percent of its membership. Bills relating to fiscal and military affairs may not be introduced in the National Panchayat without the king's permission, and his assent to a bill is required before it becomes law. Only the king has the power to amend the Constitution, but his action must be approved by at least two-thirds of a Special Committee formed from the Council of State and the National Panchayat to review proposed constitutional amendments. He may regulate and amend rules for succession to the throne at his own discretion.

The king may grant pardons, reprieves and respites and remit, suspend or commute the sentence of any court. His actions are not subject to judicial review. All powers not specifically conferred elsewhere by the Constitution continue to be vested in the king.

If he finds that "a grave emergency exists whereby the security of the country or any part thereof is threatened by war, external aggression or internal disturbance," the king may proclaim a state of emergency, suspend all or part of the Constitution, and assume powers lodged in any other part of the government. There is no time limit specified by the Constitution for which such emergency powers may be held.

Palace Secretariat

The immediate aides and assistants to the king are contained in the Palace Secretariat. In the prevailing system of government—where royal initiative is the activating force—the personal staff of the monarch is of central importance as an instrument of control, a source of influence and a channel of access to him. Staffed with many officials who formerly served the Ranas and with representatives of other conservative elements, the Palace Secretariat includes four principal assistants to the king, each assisted by a staff: the Principal Secretary, the Principal Military Secretary, the Principal Private Secretary and the Principal Personal Secretary.

In addition to the Principal Secretaries, the Palace Secretariat contains: the Household Treasury; the Royal Guard, a force of several thousand men in whose loyalty King Mahendra places full confidence; a press office; a public relations office; and the Special Complaints Department, which is headed by a justice of the Supreme Court and receives grievances and petitions to the king from the citizenry.

POLICY AND EXECUTIVE ORGANS

Council of Ministers

The major executory organ of the government is the Council of Ministers, or Cabinet. Although membership in the National Panchayat is required by the Constitution for appointment to the Cabinet, ministers are selected by the king at his own discretion and they are responsible to him. The nature and distribution of ministerial functions are determined by the king. He apparently uses the Cabinet as a mechanism for implementing government programs and not as a forum for consideration of major policy, except in its operational aspects. Ministers are the executive agents of the king, holding office at his pleasure, and lack the political standing—either individually or collectively—to possess much influence in anything other than an administrative sense.

As of June 1963 the Cabinet consisted of 7 ministers, who were in charge of 11 ministries. One minister held 3 portfolios; several others held 2. A twelfth ministry, that of Defense, was not supervised from the Cabinet but was under the direct control of King Mahendra. There is no prime minister in the formal sense of the term and the Cabinet is headed by a Chairman. Tulsi Giri, formerly a rising leader of the Nepali Congress party, served as Chairman of the Council of Ministers from early 1961 until the end of 1963, when the position was vacated by his resignation as Foreign Minister, supposedly on grounds of ill health. Kirti Nidhi Bista, Minister of Education and of Public Works, Communications and Transport, was named Foreign Minister as well, but the vacancy in the chairmanship was not filled until late in February when Giri was restored to the chairmanship without explanation.

Council of State

The only clearly defined functions of the Council of State (Raj Sabha) are to deal with matters of succession or regency if the king should die or become disabled and to advise the monarch when he requests its views. Press reports from Katmandu in the middle of 1963 indicated that the Council of State might possess a larger, "policy-framing" role in addition to these responsibilities outlined in the Constitution. If that proves to be the case, the Cabinet would be subordinate to the Council, although not directly so, to the extent that the former simply implemented policies decided upon by the Council. However, it is still unclear whether the Council now has or will assume such influence. The resignation of K. I. Singh from the chairmanship of the Standing Committee of the Council of State in the early summer of 1963 may have been motivated as much by covert rivalry between the Council and the Cabinet as by more obviously political considerations.

The Constitution designates some 15 to 20 ex officio members of the Council of State—certain Cabinet members, the Commander in Chief of the Royal Nepalese Army, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Chairman of the National Panchayat and other high officials of the government. The king is authorized to appoint additional members and, as constituted by King Mahendra in April 1963, the Council contained about 70 persons. Royal appointees consisted mainly of immediate and collateral members of the royal family; former prime ministers, ministers and other high officials; the central chairmen of all the class and professional organizations; key figures in the Palace Secretariat; a number of generals (some of them retired); well-known, longtime politicians; and social and cultural leaders.

Except when convened upon the death or illness of the monarch, the full membership of the Council of State meets only when summoned by the king. However, there is a Permanent (Standing) Committee of the Council, numbering from 7 to 15 members, which is empowered to exercise any of the functions of its parent body. The king acts as chairman of the full Council; the chairmanship of the Standing Committee rotates alphabetically, changing each meeting.

National Guidance Council

With the formation of the National Guidance Council in August 1963, the structure of the *panchayat* system was completed. The initial task of bringing into existence the *panchayats* and the class and professional organizations was given to a newly created Ministry of National Guidance in early 1961. After the National Panchayat was convened in April 1963, the Ministry was abolished and its functions were reportedly transferred to the Ministry of Panchayat. It appears, however, that a body at a higher level and with a larger scope than a ministry was found necessary to supervise the manifold activities of the various elements of the *panchayat* system, and thus the interdepartmental Council was formed.

According to a statement by King Mahendra in April 1963, the purpose of the National Guidance Council is to "maintain harmony and coordination among the different class organizations and to engage and activise the enthusiasm and high spirit of the people in the development of the country." Later reports suggested that the concerns of the Council would be more general; it was to "watch and deliberate on national developments and see that the administration is guided along its proper course." Therefore, it appears that although the National Guidance Council will devote its attention primarily to coordinating the activities of the various levels of the *panchayat* system and regulating their relationships with the central government, it will also deal with the full range of national policy. Because of its preeminent position in the administrative hierarchy of the new political structure and its implicit policy responsibilities, the National Guidance Council is potentially a strong rival of the Cabinet.

The Council was to contain about 30 members, among them the Chairman of the National Panchayat, the 4 senior members of the Cabinet, a representative of each of the 14 zones and the 6 class and professional organizations, and 6 other persons with national standing. The king was to preside at its meetings.

OPERATIVE AGENCIES

Although the ministries, a central secretariat and various quasi-public bodies and independent agencies of less than ministerial rank are nominally under the immediate direction of a Cabinet drawn from the membership of the National Panchayat, they are in fact under the firm and comprehensive control of the king. Initiative within the government is highly centralized in the Royal Palace, and government ministers seem to have very little autonomy in the operation of their ministries.

The distribution of authority among the ministries and the powers and functions of other elements and levels of the government are granted, defined, amended and revoked by the king. He exercises his control in a highly personal manner, however, and the implementation of programs is dependent on his support. The king's influence is not exerted continuously and evenly, and therefore the functions, responsibilities and relationships of the various operative agencies are often unclear and poorly coordinated.

These agencies have undergone numerous reforms and reorganizations since the fall of the Ranas in 1951, but their effectiveness as instruments for the implementation of policies and programs formulated at a higher level was still very limited at the beginning of 1964. The effort to transform a traditional, military bureaucracy designed to repress change into a modern, civilian system able to stimulate and control it has taken place during a period marked by governmental instability and political turbulence, and the effort has suffered accordingly.

Frequent changes of government have led to chaos and the partisanship in the administration, paralyzed the conduct and inhibited the continuity of government programs, and produced an inheritance of disaffected and incapable public servants for succeeding governments. Although the Public Service Commission was created in 1951 to regulate appointment and promotion in the Civil Service on a merit basis, its efforts were often nullified by political favoritism and it has not yet become a potent force for the improvement of the public service. The corruption of public officials has also been a serious problem. Although corruption is known to exist and, to a degree, tolerated as a natural state of affairs by the people, its prevalence has impeded the growth of popular confidence in the government.

Ministries

Government reorganizations since 1951 have caused the number of ministries to fluctuate from 7 to 17. At the beginning of 1964 there were 12. The Ministry of Defense is not supervised by a minister but is under the direct control of King Mahendra, a fact indicative of the important role of the armed forces in the present regime and in keeping with the traditional reliance on it by Nepalese rulers. Also a major factor in the structure of monarchical control is the Ministry of Home Affairs which has under it the territorial administration (zonal commissioners and district governors) and the police, as well as the Anti-Corruption Department.

Closely allied to the work of the Ministry of Home Affairs are the functions of the Ministry of Panchayat Affairs, and as of the beginning of 1964 the coordination of their related activities was facilitated by vesting in a single minister the responsibility for both ministries. The Ministry of Panchayat Affairs includes the Departments for: Panchayat Organization, which deals with administrative and structural problems at all levels of the new system; Panchayat Development, which coordinates and supervises economic development projects undertaken through the *panchayats;* and Cooperatives, which advises *panchayats* on the formation and operations of producers' and consumers' cooperatives.

The location of Radio Nepal and the Department of Publicity and Broadcasting in the Panchayat Ministry—to which they were transferred from the Home Ministry in 1962—affirms that the *panchayat* system is the principal channel for communication between the government and the people and suggests the utility of the system as a vehicle for political control.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is prestigious but somewhat less influential than the Home and Defense Ministries, and the customary possession of this portfolio by the king's first minister reflects its importance to royal policy.

Other ministries are: Economic Planning; Law and Justice; Finance; Forests, Food and Agriculture; Health, Irrigation and Electricity; Education; Public Works, Communications and Transport; and Industry and Commerce.

Each ministry is under the control of a minister and an assistant minister appointed by the king. The highest ranking permanent official of a ministry is the secretary, who is a civil servant, as are his immediate subordinates, the joint secretaries and the under secretaries. In some instances a joint secretary serves as the permanent chief of a ministry rather than a secretary, and there is usually only one in each ministry. Although the secretary is responsible for the routine administration of the ministry, his major function, along with the joint and under secretaries and their attendant personnel, is to advise the minister on policy questions and on the general administration of the ministry. They perform essentially a staff function. The actual implementation of government programs and projects is the responsibility of the executive and technical departments of the ministries, such as the Departments of Museums and of Primary and Secondary Education in the Ministry of Education; the Departments of Mint and of Customs and Excise of the Ministry of Finance. The executive departments are headed by directors and assistant directors (see fig. 8).

Central Secretariat

Operations and programs of the ministries are coordinated by the Central Secretariat. Composed of the permanent secretaries of all the ministries, the Central Secretariat is headed by the Chief Secretary to the Government, who has general responsibility for supervising every aspect of government administration. He also serves as Secretary to the Council of Ministers.

Nonministerial Bodies

The Constitution provides for several quasi-independent government agencies of less than cabinet rank. The Public Service Commission is

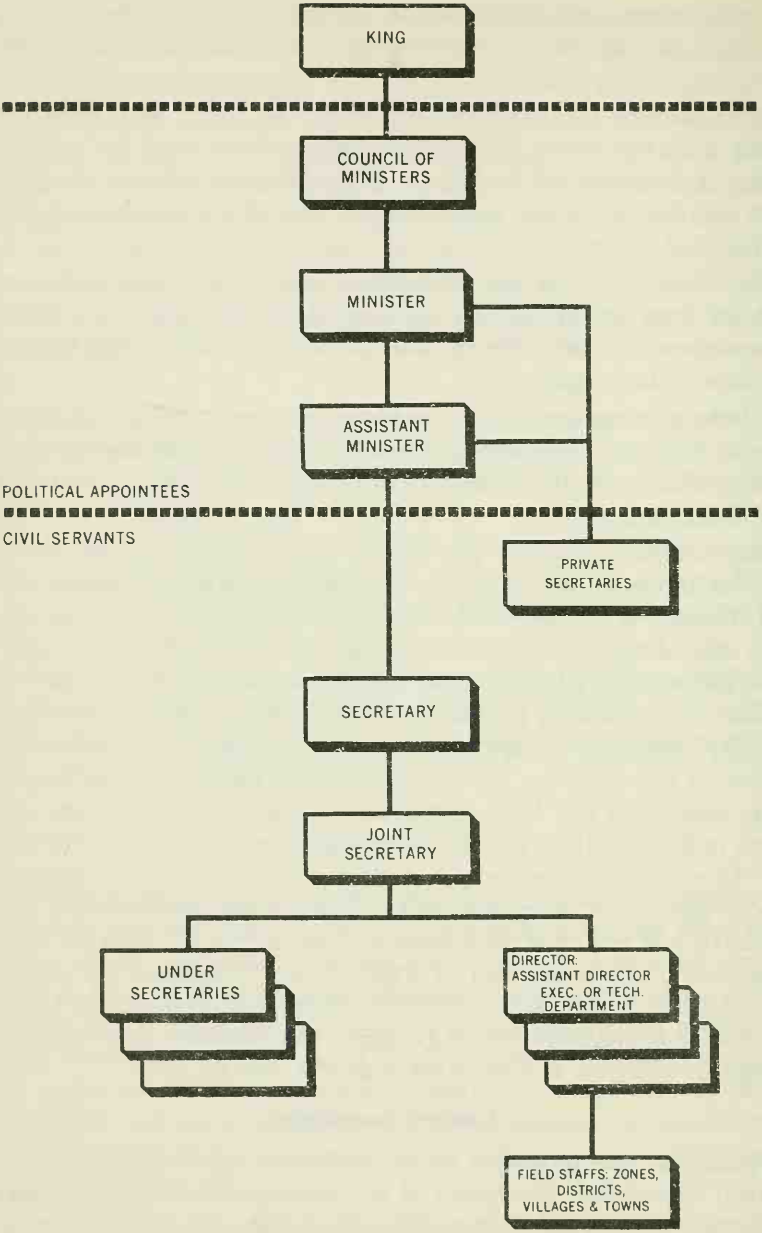
KING
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS
MINISTER
ASSISTANT MINISTER
POLITICAL APPOINTEES
CIVIL SERVANTS
PRIVATE SECRETARIES
SECRETARY
JOINT SECRETARY
UNDER SECRETARIES
DIRECTOR: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR EXEC. OR TECH. DEPARTMENT
FIELD STAFFS: ZONES, DISTRICTS, VILLAGES & TOWNS

Figure 8. Structure of a Typical Nepalese Ministry.

to be consulted on principles and policies to be followed in government personnel administration and on the suitability of individual candidates for appointment and promotion in the civil service. However, the king possesses the authority to determine which positions shall be governed by civil service rules. The limited influence of the Public Service Commission has further diminished since the removal of the parliamentary government in 1960, and the conditions of government service have become almost wholly dependent on the wishes of the king.

The Auditor General audits the accounts of all branches of the government, including public corporations, and is authorized to inspect all records pertaining to that function. The Attorney General advises the king and the government on constitutional and legal questions. In addition to these offices created by the Constitution, there are two departments which operate apart from the direct control of any of the ministries. The Department of Inspection and Supervision has no functions of its own and serves as a reservoir of reserve personnel who are assigned temporarily to other elements of the government for special tasks as the need arises. There is also a Department of Public Administration, headed by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, which presumably is concerned with management and organization matters throughout the government.

Public Corporations

Certain other activities of the government are conducted through the form of public corporations. There were eight such bodies in the middle of 1963: the Nepal Rastra Bank; the Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation; the Timber Corporation of Nepal; the Nepal Industrial Development Corporation (NIDC); the Nepal Electric Corporation; the Nepal Bank Ltd.; the National News Agency; and Nepal Trading Ltd. The relationship of the National News Agency to the government is probably typical of all the other public corporations. The government holds 60 percent of its stock, appoints four of the seven members of its governing board, and has "almost absolute control" over it. The public corporations are a relatively new feature of the governmental structure, and there have been reports of official concern that they have not yet begun to function properly and that coordination between them and the ministries has been poor.

THE PANCHAYAT SYSTEM

The *panchayat* structure is a complex system of hierarchically arranged assemblies and councils which rests on a base of village assemblies comprising the entire adult population, rises through a series of indirectly elected higher bodies, and culminates in a national deliberative body empowered to recommend legislation to the king. It is organized in four levels—village and town, district, zone, and national, and at each level except the national there are a pair of deliberate bodies—an assembly and a council. Another component of the system, which follows the same organizational pattern, is the class and professional organizations (see fig. 9). The broad aim of the system, as ex-

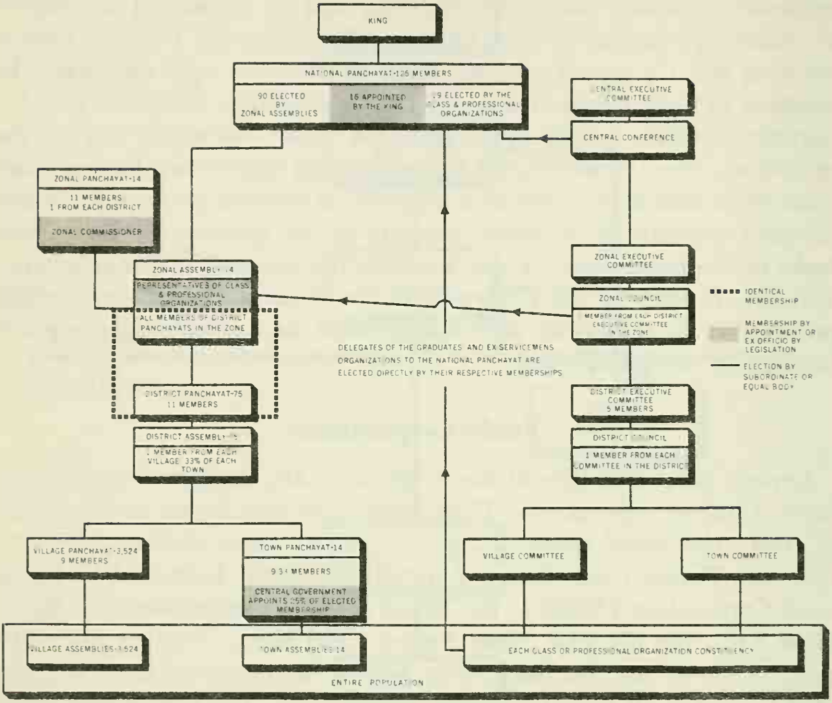
KING
NATIONAL PANCHAYAT-125 MEMBERS
90 ELECTED BY ZONAL ASSEMBLIES
16 APPOINTED BY THE KING
19 ELECTED BY THE CLASS & PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
CENTRAL CONFERENCE
ZONAL PANCHAYAT-14
11 MEMBERS 1 FROM EACH DISTRICT
ZONAL COMMISSIONER
ZONAL ASSEMBLY-14
REPRESENTATIVES OF CLASS & PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
ALL MEMBERS OF DISTRICT PANCHAYATS IN THE ZONE
ZONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
ZONAL COUNCIL
MEMBER FROM EACH DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN THE ZONE
IDENTICAL MEMBERSHIP
MEMBERSHIP BY APPOINTMENT OR EX OFFICIO BY LEGISLATION
ELECTION BY SUBORDINATE OR EQUAL BODY
DELEGATES OF THE GRADUATES AND EX-SERVICEMENS ORGANIZATIONS TO THE NATIONAL PANCHAYAT ARE ELECTED DIRECTLY BY THEIR RESPECTIVE MEMBERSHIPS
DISTRICT PANCHAYAT-75
11 MEMBERS
DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
5 MEMBERS
DISTRICT ASSEMBLY-75
1 MEMBER FROM EACH VILLAGE 33% OF EACH TOWN
DISTRICT COUNCIL
1 MEMBER FROM EACH COMMITTEE IN THE DISTRICT
VILLAGE PANCHAYAT-3,524
9 MEMBERS
TOWN PANCHAYAT-14
9-34 MEMBERS
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT APPOINTS 25% OF ELECTED MEMBERSHIP
VILLAGE COMMITTEE
TOWN COMMITTEE
VILLAGE ASSEMBLIES-3,524
TOWN ASSEMBLIES-14
EACH CLASS OR PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION CONSTITUENCY
ENTIRE POPULATION

Figure 9. Structure of the Panchayats and Class and Professional Organizations in Nepal.

pressed by King Mahendra, is to embody Nepal's profession of adherence to democratic principles within a political and governmental framework consonant with the pattern of traditional institutions. The King contends that the *panchayat* system, while exhibiting many of the characteristics of the governmental structures of other countries—India, Pakistan, Yugoslavia, Indonesia and Egypt—is a genuinely Nepalese political form with deep roots in the nation's history and culture and is well suited to its contemporary needs and conditions. The *panchayat* system is to foster the growth of democracy from the bottom up, rather than by attempting to impose it from above as in the past, by enlisting the active cooperation and participation of the entire people in administration and economic development. Similarly, as the *panchayats* mature, the authority of the central government is to be decentralized by the dispersal of administrative powers throughout all levels of the system.

Panchayat Structure

Local Panchayats

At the lowest level of the *panchayat* system are the assemblies and councils of the villages and towns. For the purposes of the system, the country's 28,770 villages have been grouped into 3,524 units called villages (*gaun*). Each of these village units, with an average population of about 2,000, has a village assembly (*gaun sabha*) which is composed of all citizens over 21 years of age who reside within the village limits. Each assembly meets twice a year; the winter meeting reviews the village budget and the summer meeting is concerned with development programs.

The assembly also elects the village council (*gaun panchayat*). The village is divided into nine wards and each elects one member to this executive committee. Elections for village *panchayats* were held throughout the winter of 1961–62. Carried out originally by a show of hands, they are to be conducted by secret ballot in the future. *Panchayat* members (*pancha*) serve 6-year terms and elect their own chief (*pradhan pancha*) and deputy chief (*up-pradhan pancha*). The panchayat meets twice a month and is organized into functional subcommittees. The village development worker (*gaun sevak*), appointed by the central government, acts as secretary to the assembly and the *panchayat*.

Localities with a population of more than 10,000 are organized as towns (*nagar*) in the *panchayat* system. There were 14 such localities which held elections for town *panchayats* in the summer of 1962. Although the structure and functions of the town council's (*nagar panchayats*) are similar to those of the villages, there are important differences in the size and composition of their membership and in the scope of their responsibilities. A town which meets the minimum population requirement has a *panchayat* of 9 members; larger towns have proportionately larger *panchayats* up to a maximum membership of 33. The central government may also appoint members of town *panchayats*, although the number so selected may not exceed 25 percent of the regularly elected membership. Each town is divided into a number of wards equal to the elected membership of its *panchayat*. The officers and electoral procedures of the town *panchayats* are the same as those of the villages.

The local *panchayats* constitute the first uniform system of local self-government actually to come into operation throughout the whole country. They are the key units in the *panchayat* structure and carry on a variety of activities. They are authorized to levy taxes. They may act as arbitral and judicial bodies with original jurisdiction over certain civil and criminal cases, although there were conflicting reports over whether they had begun to exercise this function by the end of 1963. The organic law for the *panchayats*, the Village Panchayat Act of 1962, provides that a court is to consist of the deputy chief, presiding, and two other *panchayat* members, one from the ward of the plaintiff and the other from that of the defendant. The *panchayats* also maintain land and other records, compile statistics, and, through local development boards and centers, engage in development and public works activities in the general fields of agriculture, education, animal husbandry, transportation and public health. The *panchayats* are to draft local development plans and submit them to the central government through the higher levels of *panchayat* organization, where they are to be reviewed and coordinated at each stage. In addition, the local *panchayats* are to serve as entry points into the governmental structure for, and as a channel for conveyance to a higher level of the views of the general citizenry.

District Panchayats

There are 75 districts, or development blocks (*jilla*), and the number of town and village *panchayats* in each district ranges from as few as 2 to as many as 126 (see fig. 10). The next step above the local *panchayat* is the district assembly, and its membership is selected by the village and town *panchayats* within the district. Each village *panchayat* elects one of its members, and each town *panchayat* elects a number equivalent to one-third of its elected membership to the district assembly. Like the village and town assemblies, the district assembly holds two meetings a year—one in the winter on the district budget and another in the summer on development matters.

The district assembly elects from its members the district *panchayat,* which includes a chief and deputy chief, who serve 2-year terms, and nine other members, who serve 6-year terms and of whom a third vacate their seats every 2 years. Elections to constitute district *panchayats* were held in early 1963. Persons elected to a district *panchayat* automatically relinquish their seats in the local *panchayat,* as do all those at every other stage of the system who are elected to a higher *panchayat* from a lower, and the vacancies so created are filled by by-elections. The district *panchayats* have broad powers for supervising and coordinating the development programs of the villages and themselves carry out development projects through the district development boards and centers.

Zonal Panchayats

There are 14 zonal (*anchal*) assemblies (see fig. 11). Each is composed of all the members of the district *panchayats* within the zone. The zonal assembly also includes representatives of the class and professional organizations who, presumably, are also members of the zonal executive committees of the groups they represent. They are associate members of the zonal assembly, however, and may not vote, but otherwise they may participate fully in its meetings. The central government appoints the secretary to the zonal assembly.

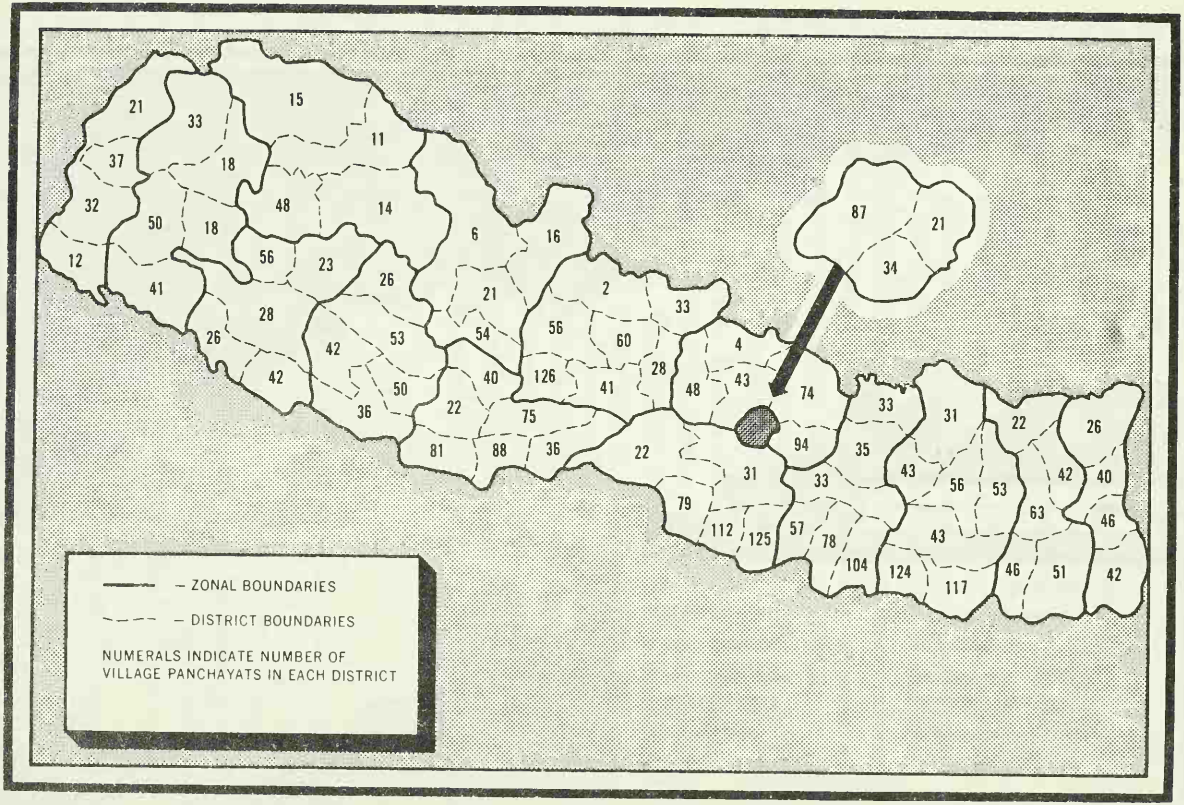
— ZONAL BOUNDARIES
— DISTRICT BOUNDARIES
NUMERALS INDICATE NUMBER OF VILLAGE PANCHAYATS IN EACH DISTRICT
21
33
15
11
37
18
32
50
18
48
14
12
56
23
41
28
26
26
42
53
42
50
36
6
16
21
54
40
22
75
81
88
36
2
56
60
33
126
41
28
4
43
48
74
94
87
21
34
22
31
79
112
125
33
35
33
57
78
104
31
43
56
53
43
124
117
22
63
42
26
40
46
46
51
42

Figure 10. District Panchayat Boundaries in Nepal.

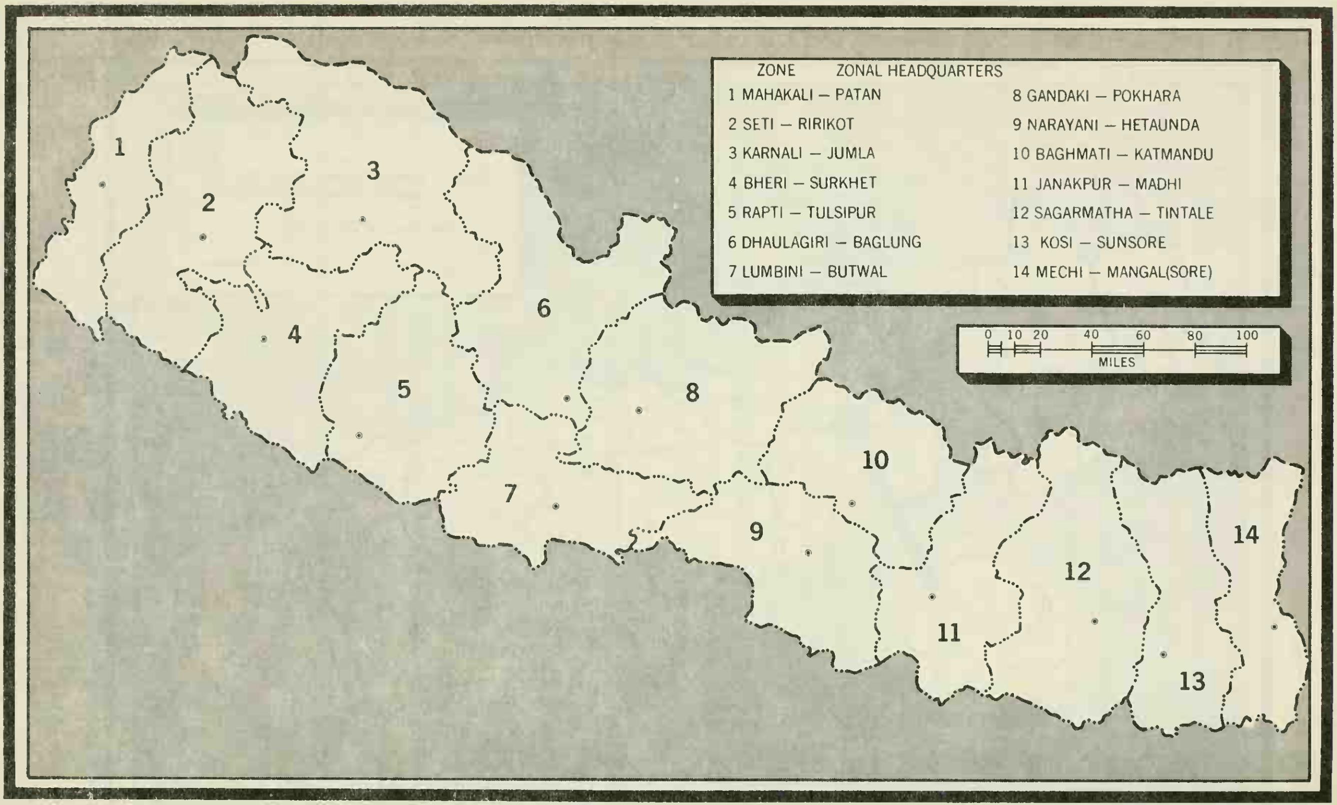
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
ZONE
ZONAL HEADQUARTERS
1 MAHAKALI – PATAN
2 SETI – RIRIKOT
3 KARNALI – JUMLA
4 BHERI – SURKHET
5 RAPTI – TULSIPUR
6 DHAULAGIRI – BAGLUNG
7 LUMBINI – BUTWAL
8 GANDAKI – POKHARA
9 NARAYANI – HETAUNDA
10 BAGHMATI – KATMANDU
11 JANAKPUR – MADHI
12 SAGARMATHA – TINTALE
13 KOSI – SUNSORE
14 MECHI – MANGAL(SORE)
0
10
20
40
60
80
100
MILES

Figure 11. Zonal Panchayat Boundaries in Nepal, 1962.

Each zonal assembly elects a zonal *panchayat,* and such elections were conducted in the early spring of 1963. Its size, officers and terms of office are identical to those of the district *panchayat,* but its membership includes the Zonal Commissioner as a nonvoting associate member and it must include a representative of every district within the zone. The secretary to the zonal *panchayat* is also appointed by the central government. The formal responsibilities of the zonal *panchayat* include: the implementation of zonal development plans forwarded to it by the central government; the formulation and execution of programs of its own; and the planning, supervision and coordination of district development schemes within its jurisdiction. However, it seems that these administrative and supervisory duties are a secondary function of the zonal *panchayat* and that its primary concerns are to be national rather than local. It is apparently regarded as simply another stage on the way to the National Panchayat whose basic purpose is to serve as a subsidiary forum to identify, discuss and focus the attention of the zonal population on national problems and issues in order to facilitate the deliberations of the National Panchayat.

Each zonal assembly also elects a portion of the membership of the National Panchayat. The actual number elected by each varies according to the population of the zone, but the zonal assembly must elect at least one representative from each of its constituent districts to the National Panchayat. In the cases where a zonal assembly elects more members of the National Panchayat than it has districts, the additional members are to be chosen from the more populous districts within the zone. The number of districts within a zone varies from 4 to 8; the numerical representation of zones within the National Panchayat varies from 4 to 11.

National Panchayat

The highest level of the *panchayat* system is the National Panchayat (Rashtriya Panchayat). Its primary function is to act as an arena for debate of national questions and as a platform for the expression of public interests and opinions as they have been channeled to it through the lower levels of the *panchayats* and the class and professional organizations. It also has limited legislative functions which are dependent for their exercise on the acquiescence of the king.

There are 125 members in the National Panchayat. The zonal assemblies elect 90 members, the class and professional organizations elect 19, and the king is authorized to appoint up to 15 percent of the total elected membership, or 16, and in 1963 the National Panchayat contained the maximum number of royal appointees. To qualify for membership a person must be a citizen and at least 25 years of age. Members elected by the zonal assemblies serve 6-year terms and all others serve for 4 years. Of the former, one-third are to be elected every 2 years.

The principal officers of the National Panchayat are the Chairman—who is appointed by the king on the recommendation of the membership, serves a 2-year term, and presides over its meetings—and the Vice-Chairman—who is elected by the membership and also serves a 2-year term. To advise the Chairman and Vice-Chairman on matters of procedure and agenda, there is a Steering Committee of 21 members. Its ex officio members are the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Ministers for Law, Finance, Home, and Panchayat Affairs. The remainder of its membership is elected by the National Panchayat. Functional or legislative committees of the legislature, which were formed in April 1963, include a Public Accounts Committee, a Guidance Committee, and an Estimates Committee. The National Panchayat is summoned by the king and may be prorogued either by him or by a resolution of the membership. The Constitution specifies that not more than 6 months shall elapse between the end of one session and the beginning of another. The first session of the National Panchayat met in April 1963 and lasted a month; the second was to convene in late January 1964 and was expected to sit an equal length of time.

The Constitution guarantees members of the National Panchayat against arrest, detention or prosecution for any statement or vote in the legislature. In addition, members are to be immune from arrest while the National Panchayat is in session and during the period between the notification summoning a session and the time it actually convenes. However, this immunity shall not apply in criminal cases nor when an arrest is made under laws providing for preventive detention. The "regularity" of any of its actions shall be determined only by the National Panchayat and is not to be challenged in any court. The National Panchayat has the power to determine when any of its privileges have been encroached upon and when such encroachments constitute contempt of the National Panchayat. In such cases, it has the power to issue summonses and warrants of arrest and may order the imprisonment of any person found in contempt for a period not exceeding the duration of its current session.

Members of the National Panchayat are to enjoy "full freedom of speech," but discussion of the conduct of the king or other members of the royal family, of the action of any judge in the discharge of his duty, or of any case sub judice in any Nepalese court is prohibited. The king may address and send messages to the National Panchayat and, in the latter case, may compel it to debate the matters so presented and to submit its views to him. Similarly, the legislature may submit an address to the king. All proceedings of the National Panchayat and its committees are to be conducted in secrecy, but summary reports of every meeting may be published for the general information of the public. One-third of the membership must be present to constitute a quorum, and all decisions of the National Panchayat are to be taken by a majority of those present and voting. Unless otherwise provided for by the Constitution, the legislature may formulate the rules by which it will conduct its own business.

Any bill approved by the National Panchayat requires the assents of the king to become law. Although the king's concurrence was also necessary for a bill to become law under the parliamentary system, it was expected to be automatically forthcoming once legislation had been passed in the legislature. In the *panchayat* system, however, royal consent to a bill is no longer a pro forma act, and the king is an integral and crucial part of the legislative process. The National Panchayat may, in addition to its almost unrestricted powers of debate, consider legislation on any subject. However, the consent of the king must be obtained through the appropriate minister or assistant minister for the introduction of any bill dealing with public loans or the Army, involving the imposition or collection of taxes or an increase in tax rates, or relating to the appropriation or spending of government funds or to any increase in amounts to be spent or appropriated. When the National Panchayat is not in session, the king may issue ordinances which are to have the full effect of legislation. Such ordinances must be introduced in the National Panchayat within 7 days after a session resumes, and if they fail to receive approval within 45 days from that time they automatically become null and void.

Panchayat Administrative Structure

A major purpose in creating the *panchayat* system was to decentralize administrative responsibility for economic development and social reform. Consequently, accompanying the establishment of *panchayats* at each level has been the formation of a parallel administrative structure whose primary unit is at the local level. In the new system, village and town *panchayats* have development boards which direct the implementation of development, welfare and public works programs through *panchayat* development centers. Headed by *panchayat* development officers, the development centers are the operating arms of the *panchayats* for the execution of projects which are locally originated and also for those which are local phases of the national development plan. They contain the personnel—*panchayat* development workers—with the special and technical skills required for the actual carrying out of such projects. The activities of the development centers are jointly financed by the appropriate *panchayat* unit and by the central government. The development officers and workers are appointed by the central government and are responsible to the Panchayat Development Department of the Ministry of Panchayat.

The administrative organization of the local *panchayats* is repeated at the district and zonal levels. At the higher levels of the structure, the supervisory functions of the administrative units grow proportionately larger, and its operating responsibilities are reduced accordingly. The chief field officer in the *panchayat* administrative system is the zonal commissioner. Appointed by the central government and responsible to the Ministry of Home Affairs, he supervises and coordinates development activities at lower levels. At the national level the administrative functions of the *panchayats* are under the direction of several government ministries rather than the National Panchayat which, unlike other *panchayats,* seems to have no administrative or supervisory powers over subordinate levels of the system.

In addition to their primary responsibility for economic development it is King Mahendra's intention eventually to grant village and district *panchayats* general administrative authority "to the maximum extent possible." It is not known what the King regards as the limits of possibility. However, this deconcentration of power was to take place gradually as the strength of the *panchayat* system grew, and at the beginning of 1964 there did not appear to have been any significant extension of administrative autonomy at any level of the structure. If anything, the lines of central control seem to have been tightened and multiplied. Moreover, the structure of the new administrative system was still in a rudimentary stage; its activities were limited; and its functions were ill-defined. Its internal relationships and the external relationships between the new structure as a whole and the older administrative system —and, to a lesser extent, the central government—had not been clearly defined. In addition, during 1963 the *panchayat* administrative structure had not begun the implementation of the nationally formulated development scheme, and its development activities had not gone beyond the execution of locally devised public works projects. In response to demands from *panchayats* and administrators at the lower levels for definition of their powers and relationships, the government announced during 1963 that the authority of zonal commissioners and district development officers would be clarified and expanded.

Class and Professional Organizations

There are six class and professional organizations: Nepal Peasants' Organization; Nepal Workers' Organization; Nepal Women's Organization; Nepal Youth Organization; Nepal Ex-servicemen's Organization; and Nepal Graduates' Organization. These organizations are arranged into village and town, district, zonal, and national bodies and their major purposes are to articulate and promote the interests of the basic social and economic groups and to stimulate and organize the participation of their members in development programs. They are also to endeavor to create among their constituents a spirit of enthusiasm and cooperation for the *panchayat* system and the goals of national unity and reconstruction. Although King Mahendra has forcefully stated that they are to abstain strictly from all activities of a political nature, the class and professional organizations possess many of the structural and functional characteristics of government-sponsored political parties. They have a complex organization which parallels that of the *panchayats*. Their membership includes the entire population of the country. They have been granted organizational monopolies in their respective spheres of activity; all other organizations and associations—except those which cannot be subsumed under any of the six categories and have been placed under the supervision of an appropriate ministry—have either been integrated under the control of the class and professional organizations or have been abolished. Moreover, the class and professional organizations appear to be under closer government control and supervision than are the *panchayats*.

Of the functions of the class and professional organizations, the most clearly governmental is their election of a portion of the membership of the National Panchayat. The Graduates', Peasants' and Youth Organizations elect four members each, the Women's Organization elects three and the Workers' and Ex-servicemen's Organizations elect two each.

The basic constituencies of the class and professional organizations are identical with those of the village and town *panchayats*. All members of each organization within the *panchayat* take part in the selection, by direct election, of the primary unit of the class and professional organizations—the village and town committees. Each village and town committee of each class and professional organization selects one of its members to serve on the next higher echelon, the district council. The district council in turn elects from its own membership a five-member district executive committee. It was originally planned that the process of indirect election would stop at the district executive committee and that subsequent levels of each organization would be chosen by the central government. It now appears, however, that the indirect electoral procedure has been extended to the highest level of the class and professional organizations. Thus, each district executive committee chooses one member to a zonal council, and the zonal council selects an executive committee from among its own membership. The zonal committees elect the national, or central, bodies of the class and professional organizations. The central sessions usually number from 100 to 500 and they elect both the central executive committee and the delegates to the National Panchayat. The delegates of the Graduates' and Ex-servicemen's Organizations to the National Panchayat, however, are elected by the direct vote of their total membership rather than by their central sessions.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

There is, in addition to the inchoate administrative structure which follows the organizational lines of the *panchayats*, another, older system of administration which came into existence under the Ranas and remained in operation after their fall from power. At the beginning of 1964 it appeared that this traditional administrative structure continued to exist without major modifications despite the introduction of the *panchayat* system. Although presumably the traditional system will be allowed to atrophy as the growing strength of the *panchayats* enables them to assume larger responsibilities, the traditional system still constituted the primary channel for the exercise of central authority throughout the country.

Although its structure has remained largely intact, the traditional system has undergone numerous reforms and reorganizations. During the Rana period, the purposes of local administration were limited to the collection of revenue and the maintenance of law and order. With its termination, the guiding philosophy of the ends of the state which had retarded the growth of the country for so long was radically altered, economic development and social reform replaced oppression and exploitation as the official goals of domestic policy, and the nature and purposes of local administration were altered accordingly. Renovation of the traditional administrative structure has not been accomplished in an orderly fashion, however. Recent innovations have been poorly planned and haphazardly executed, and implicit and overt conflicts of function, authority and responsibility pervade the whole system. The establishment of the *panchayat* administrative structure without any clear definition of its duties, except in a general way, has contributed to this disorganization. Since none of the internal units of the traditional system corresponds to the various levels of the *panchayat* system, the simultaneous operation of the two has been a source of considerable confusion and conflict within the government, particularly at the lower levels, where administrators and *panchayat* members have pressed the central government for clarification of their powers and relationships.

In the traditional system the basic unit of administration was the district (*ilaka*). The number of districts varied from time to time with the rearrangement of boundaries; until very recently there were 32 districts, and at the end of 1963 there were 38. At one time there were subdivisions of the districts called *jilla,* which apparently have long since become inactive and passed out of the administrative structure. There were about 50 of these *jilla,* and one or more were found in each district. Although they appear to have lost any administrative significance, their names are still used by the population as geographic references. A subdivision of the *jilla* which seems to be still in operation, mainly for the collection of rents and taxes, was the county (*thum,* or *paraganna* in the Tarai), of which there were 491. At the bottom of the administrative hierarchy were the villages (*gaun*) and the few towns (*nagar*). There would usually be hundreds of villages in a single district.

The district was the most important of the administrative units, and the principal administrative officer of the central government at the district level was the governor (*bada hakim*). The governor became the chief administrative position during the middle of the Rana period and was continued after the overthrow of the Ranas in 1951. Appointed by the prime minister before 1951 and by the king thereafter, he was usually a retired police or army officer of high rank and was always either a member of the Rana family or of one of their client families. Although most of the district governors were replaced after 1951, the powers of the office were left essentially the same. Because of the vagueness with which his duties were defined and the difficulty of communicating with the government in Katmandu, however, the governor was in complete charge of all civil affairs in his district. His authority and discretion were often so great as to constitute a form of autonomous rule, even though the central government retained the power to dismiss him. In 1963 it was reported in the Nepalese press that the government intended to abolish the office of district governor and to absorb incumbents of the position into the development program. It appeared that the implementation of this policy had not yet started at the beginning of 1964.

There were usually four district offices under the supervision of the governor and, in most cases, they were under the direction of deputies (*subbha*). The office of civil administration (*goswara*) was concerned with the full range of district affairs and, in addition, issued licenses and permits, conducted appeals from the district court, occasionally carried out minor public works projects, and administered the militia. The land revenue office (*mal adda*) collected land taxes, acted as the local disbursing agent for the central government, and kept such fragmentary land records as there were. The police headquarters (*thana*), headed by a superintendent whose rank was roughly equivalent to a lieutenant colonel in the Army, had under its direction a constabulary force stationed in villages and at strategic points which maintained law and order, investigated and reported on crimes and other incidents and manned the district prison. The fourth office included the district judiciary (*adalat,* or *amini* in the Tarai), which was empowered to try all cases except those falling under the jurisdiction of courts-martial.

The only exception to this arrangement was the system of administration which prevailed in the Katmandu Valley, which was under the overall supervision of a valley commissioner rather than a governor. The Valley was divided into three sections—Katmandu, Patan and Bhadgaon—and each was under the control of a magistrate.

At the village level, the ultimate point of contact between the mass of the people and the rulers in Katmandu was the representative of the central government known as a headman (variously styled *mukhiya, talukdar, jimidar, zimiwal, patwari* or *subbha*). The collection of rents and taxes appears to have been his major function, all others being carried out from the district headquarters under the direction of the governor. Administrative functions of the villages and their relationships with the district headquarters seem to have varied considerably from region to region, however. The position of headman was hereditary and when a vacancy occurred it was usually filled by government appointment, although there were instances when it was filled by auction or by election by village landowners. The headman received a percentage of the taxes he collected, and each man in his village was required to render 1 day's free labor to him.

The lines of authority and responsibility between the central government and district and village officials were vague and unclear. The major relationship between the central government and local administration was that between the district governor and the Ministry of Home Affairs, to which he was theoretically responsible. The Home Ministry did not have exclusive charge of local affairs, however; the district judiciary was responsible to the Supreme Court, the land revenue office to the Ministry of Finance, and other officials were responsible to other ministries. When the system functioned as intended, local officials were subject to the sometimes conflicting demands of the district governor and the authorities in Katmandu. As a practical matter, however, the power of the district governor appears to have been sufficient to enable his wishes to prevail.

COURT SYSTEM

Of the many governmental changes which have taken place since the fall of the Ranas in 1951, among the most striking have been the growing autonomy of the courts and the gradual liberalization of many basic legal principles. The court system was formerly but one of many instruments used by the prime minister to maintain the authoritarian rule of the Rana family, and the concepts of law which it applied were arbitrary, punitive and oppressive. When the king was restored to primacy he initially attempted to keep the judiciary subordinate to his wishes. Since 1955, however, despite a long tradition of government which intermixes administrative and judicial functions, it has been allowed to become a relatively independent branch of the government. Moreover, reforms in the legal system have rendered both substantive and procedural law progressively more systematic.

In 1963, King Mahendra stated that his objective was the establishment of "a perfect rule of law" in which the people would receive justice "smoothly, expeditiously, and without discrimination." Despite major improvements since 1951, the judicial system still suffers from a number of serious weaknesses which impede the realization of these ideals. The independence and integrity of the judiciary are repeatedly questioned in the press; the intervention of political figures and government officials in the judicial process appears to be a frequent occurrence, and caste and economic status appear to be important determinants of the availability of justice. The jurisdiction of courts, never clear, has been complicated further by the introduction of the *panchayat* system. Although they had not begun to exercise them by the end of 1963, *panchayats* at the local level possess judicial functions, but the extent of their jurisdiction as against older courts is not yet clear. Moreover, it is still uncertain to what extent these and higher level *panchayats* will assume judicial authority, and therefore the fundamental role of the judiciary and its position within the government will probably be subject to increasing study and discussion. In addition to these political and constitutional issues, the burden of litigation probably will increase as the rate of economic and social reform accelerates and will necessitate concomitant changes and refinements in the judicial system and process (see ch. 21, Public Order and Internal Security).

CHAPTER 12

POLITICAL DYNAMICS

At the beginning of 1964, King Mahendra was the supreme arbiter of the nation's politics, and the power of the monarchy was greater than it had been for over a century and a half. The revolution of 1951 ended the subordination of the monarchy to the Rana prime ministers, and under King Tribhuvan its authority gradually revived in the absence of any other source of stability and leadership. After King Mahendra's ascension to the throne in 1955 the scope of royal influence continued to expand and reached its widest extent in 1960 when he abolished a short-lived parliamentary regime and took personal control of the government. The system of royal control has remained in effect since that time, although a new form of government—the *panchayat* system—was established during 1962–63.

The *panchayat* system is designed to strengthen the position of the King by gradually giving the people a larger voice in the determination of the nation's affairs and involving them more closely in the conduct and administration of economic development programs. The King is so closely identified with the scheme as its author that its failure would be a serious blow to his leadership and prestige. The eventual compatibility of the *panchayat* system with the continuation of royal predominance depends to a large degree on the King's ability to guide and control the system in its initial stages, and he appears to have been successful in doing so during its first year of operation.

Since the end of parliamentary government in 1960, parties have been banned and political activity has been prohibited. There are, therefore, few formal political groups of any consequence which can be identified. The only significant opposition to the King at the beginning of 1964 came from the Nepali Congress party, the country's major political party and the vehicle of popular action against the Ranas in 1951. It has been forced to operate from headquarters in exile in India, where it has served as a nucleus around which other opposition to King Mahendra has congregated. B. P. Koirala, its leader and the Prime Minister during the parliamentary period, although in prison in Nepal since 1960, is the only person whose influence and popularity could constitute a threat to the King for the immediate future.

Other parties, their weakness demonstrated by the striking electoral victory of the Nepali Congress in 1959, have either accepted and operated within the royal *panchayat* system on a supposedly nonpartisan basis or have merged with the exiled Congress party, creating a rough polarization in the country's politics over the issue of monarchical rule.

The Communist Party, divided on the tactical question of whether to seek the direct and immediate overthrow of the monarchical system or to work within it, is split into two factions—a radical wing operating in India and a moderate one which exists more or less sub rosa in Nepal. Neither possessed much strength at the beginning of 1964.

King Mahendra has set up class and professional organizations—status and occupational groups which include the entire population in their membership—within the structure of the *panchayat* system to assure the articulation of and harmony between the various social and economic interests of the country. Although these organizations have been instructed by the King to abstain from political activity, it appears that a major purpose implicit in their formation was to serve as substitutes for the prohibited political parties.

RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Rise of Royal Power, 1951–59

At the time of the revolution of 1951, opposition to the Ranas consisted of three major groups—the king and his supporters, disgruntled members of the Rana family, and a popular movement headed by the Nepali Congress—which sought the elimination of the Rana oligarchy and the establishment of a parliamentary democratic system under a constitutional monarchy. When this combination succeeded in ousting the Ranas with the aid of the Indian Government, the importance of the role of the king and the disaffected Ranas was generally overlooked, and the event was regarded as essentially a victory for the popular forces of liberal nationalism. After the Ranas had been deprived of power, however, the Nepali Congress was disrupted by internal conflicts, and other components of the popular movement dissolved into scores of antagonistic political parties and groups which contested for control of the newly abandoned instruments of power. The struggles of these many groups immobilized the reform movement and created popular unrest and frustration which often erupted into violence (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

In the years that followed, the monarchy gradually emerged as the only political force capable of providing at least a minimum of unity and stability to the country, and it became apparent that the reestablishment of royal authority was of greater significance than the popular revolution. With the support of Ranas and former members of their regime who gravitated around the throne, the king acquired control of the major sources of power.

Parliamentary Government, 1959–60

The Nepali Congress won a decisive victory in the general elections of 1959, capturing 74 of the 109 seats in Parliament—almost four times as many as any other party. Many observers had expected that no one party would win a majority in Parliament and therefore feared that the elections would weaken and divide the country still further. The elections demonstrated, however, that the Congress, as it had claimed all along, had a strong and nationwide appeal.

After the elections King Mahendra asked the Nepali Congress to form a government, and a Cabinet with B. P. Koirala as Prime Minister took office in May. With the opening of the new Parliament 2 months later, the Koirala government began to take the first steps toward what it described as the "establishment of a socialist Nepal through parliamentary democracy." Placed in office by a following impatient for reform and frustrated by government delays, the Congress laid great emphasis on the elimination of the country's "feudal economy" and on large efforts for economic—particularly agricultural—development. It proposed the nationalization of basic industries and the institution of progressive taxes on land, urban housing, salaries, profits and foreign investments. In October 1959 the Congress majority in Parliament passed the Birta Abolition Act, a measure which radically altered existing legislation regarding the system of land tenure and had important social and political implications. Concurrently, the Koirala government undertook extensive reforms and personnel changes in the administrative structure to enable it to implement its programs more effectively (see ch. 17, Agriculture).

The Koirala government was soon confronted with serious opposition from many quarters. Its social and economic policies were opposed by powerful conservative elements and regarded as precipitous by the King. On the other hand, it was blamed in the countryside for delay in carrying out its program, and there were sporadic outbursts of violence. A section of the Congress led by the Prime Minister's half brother, M. P. Koirala, split away and went over to the opposition. The extensive administrative changes made within the government were resented in the bureaucracy, particularly among conservative former servants of the Ranas who had gradually returned to positions of influence. Talk that the prime minister intended to reorganize the Army also caused distrust of his government on the part of high-ranking officers.

The position of the Koirala government was seriously damaged by the impact of Sino-Indian relations on Nepal's foreign policy during 1959. The Tibetan rebellion in March, the flight of the Dalai Lama to India, and the deployment of enormous numbers of Chinese troops in Tibet to suppress the uprising created a volatile situation along Nepal's northern frontier, and its dangers were increased in August when the Sino-Indian border dispute first flared into the public view. As long as India and China remained on relatively good terms, Nepal's neutralist foreign policy, if uneasy, was at least tenable. With the sudden rise of tension between the country's two huge neighbors, however, a neutralist stance became much more difficult to maintain. The Nepali Congress had been strongly nationalist and anti-Communist on matters of foreign affairs, and its response to these developments was an attempt to improve relations with India. Internal political tensions would in any case have been aggravated by the crisis, and the reaction of the Koirala government laid it open to attack from the many sources of anti-Indian feeling in the country, as well as those which favored closer ties with China.

During 1960 the government encountered increasing difficulties, although the situation did not appear to be critical. On December 5, however, King Mahendra abruptly dismissed the Koirala ministry, dissolved Parliament, suspended many sections of the Constitution, declared a state of emergency, and announced that he was assuming personal control of the government. Within 3 weeks the King had banned all political parties and political activity, formed a Council of Ministers to aid him in ruling, and declared that, the parliamentary system having proved itself a failure, Nepal would in the future "build democracy layer by layer from the bottom upwards" through a *panchayat* system.

A number of reasons were cited by King Mahendra for his removal of the Koirala government. He charged it with misusing authority, multiplying corruption, weakening the administrative machinery, failing to maintain law and order, encouraging antinational elements, bringing into being "an atmosphere detrimental to the vital interests of national unity," and instituting economic steps which created "instability and insecurity among the people." At the time, opposition to the land reform schemes of the Nepali Congress was credited as being the major reason for King Mahendra's action, but this now seems unlikely as he subsequently continued them with little alteration.

There appear to have been three basic motives for the royal coup d'etat. One was the King's distaste for the role of constitutional monarch in which he was compelled to remain in the background while the Prime Minister and his party held the center of the stage. The passivity imposed upon him by the Constitution conflicted both with his character and temperament and with his conception of the monarchy as an active political force. Another reason was his intense dislike of political parties and party governments, which he has repeatedly stated have had a divisive and debilitating influence on the nation. His aversion to the Nepali Congress was strengthened by his suspicion that it contemplated the eventual elimination of the monarchy and by the knowledge that it was the only group with sufficient popular support to challenge his position. Finally, the marked drift of Nepalese foreign policy away from India and toward China after 1960 makes it clear that disagreement with Koirala's foreign policy was another major cause of the King's action.

Direct Rule, 1961–63

After taking direct control of the government, King Mahendra imprisoned most members of the Koirala administration, almost all other leading politicians in the country, and many party workers. He also purged the administration of all Nepali Congress appointees down to the district level. Rigid controls were placed on the press, and numerous petty officials, even government pensioners, were empowered by royal decree to arrest anyone engaging in activities against the government. With the notable exception of B. P. Koirala and several others, the imprisoned political leaders were released in a matter of days, but the rigorous prohibition of political activity left them with the choice of silence or flight. Many members of the Nepali Congress went into exile in India to form centers of resistance to King Mahendra's government. Other politicians, feeling they would have nothing to gain from the restoration of a system in which the Congress would predominate, accepted the King's action without protest.

Beginnings of the Panchayat System

In the year after the dismissal of the parliamentary government, King Mahendra directed his attention toward the establishment of the *panchayat* system. The Ministry of National Guidance was formed as the principal agency for supervising the establishment of the *panchayats.* Administration Rectification Committees, or tour commissions, were created in each of the 14 zones to eradicate opposition to the government, deal with local grievances, and assist subsidiary levels of government in forming *panchayats.* Elections to *panchayats* at various levels began in early 1962, and on December 16, 1962, a new constitution was promulgated by the King. With the convening on April 14, 1963 of the National Panchayat, Nepal's experiment with the new political system was launched.

The *panchayat* system provided a framework of popular participation in government under royal tutelage, and the King relinquished little of his authority to the new institutions. The national legislature, for example, was little more than an advisory body, whose views he could accept or ignore as he pleased. Moreover, he maintained a variety of controls over the political scene. Parties and other political associations continued to be banned. He had discretionary authority to determine the limits of acceptable criticism of the government in public utterances and communications media. The laws providing for preventive detention and prohibition of political activity were sufficiently broad and vague to inhibit action which the government might define as objectionable.

CURRENT POLITICAL FORCES

The King

The monarchy is the center of political life. The King is the most powerful political force and the most significant political institution in the country. He is the symbol of national unity, the source of all important government policy, and the major defender of tradition as well as the principal agent for change. The strength of the monarchy has been and remains under constant challenge from those who seek to diminish his authority by the establishment of governmental institutions less subject to his will. Disagreement over the legitimate bounds of royal power and its position in the evolving political system has been the most basic, enduring and pervasive political issue.

The King's power ultimately rests on his ability to attract and retain the support of the key elements in a scattered, locally isolated, multiethnic population. He enjoys the advantage of the prestige of a role traditionally held to have supernatural attributes and of being the most widely known national political figure. He is confronted with a dilemma, however, in incompatibilities of interest among some of his most important potential or actual supporters. The peasantry, for example, since the fall of the Ranas has received promises of social and economic betterment from a succession of political leaders and from the King himself. That there was dissatisfaction in the villages with the conditions to which such pledges were addressed was apparent in the peasant disorders and rent strikes in the 1950's in areas where the incidence of landlessness and tenacy was high. It was also apparent that the promise of reform whetted the appetite for it. On the other hand, much of the King's support comes from elements who are endowed with high hereditary status, land holdings or commercial wealth and who suspect or oppose reforms of which they see themselves as the underwriters rather than the beneficiaries.

The incompatibility of these interests confronts the King with a particularly difficult political problem in determining the rate at which reform and development are to progress. He is the focus of popular expectations for action which will compensate for over a decade of delay in carrying out economic reforms, and there is a degree of urgency required in meeting these demands which he cannot ignore without risking serious discontent. He must act with sufficient speed to prevent the eruption of a potentially explosive problem which would deprive him of any control in its solution, yet he must not move so swiftly as to provoke serious reactions from conservative groups close to the throne.

As of early 1964, King Mahendra had been able to deal with these opposing pressures without markedly diminishing his support from either group. A limited but increasing number of the peasantry recognized that he was virtually the only figure able to bring about the desired improvement in economic conditions. Similarly, the privileged elements, realizing that some change is unavoidable and that they would be even more directly threatened under any other regime, also continued to look to the King to protect their basic interests.

The King's power is also dependent to a very large extent on his control of the armed forces. He appears to be in firm possession of the allegiance of the Army and has been highly successful in inoculating it against the infection of political rivalries by cultivating and rewarding reliability as the primary military virtue. Consequently the Army, while a potential force of major importance, is a passive one. It has not exhibited any political initiative of its own, and it has exerted no political influence independently of the King's direction (see ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

Certain areas of the bureaucracy, principally the Palace Secretariat and the Central Secretariat, are also important sources of royal power. The Palace Secretariat, rather than the Cabinet, is the actual center of government, and both it and the Central Secretariat are filled with former officials of the Ranas, whose loss of influence during the parliamentary period demonstrated to them how closely their fortunes were linked to the continued predominance of the King. In making government appointments, King Mahendra has generally adhered to the traditional patterns by which various categories of offices were reserved for particular caste or ethnic groups. Brahmans dominate the judiciary, and the civil service and the staff of the Palace Secretariat are drawn largely from the Newar community of Katmandu.

Political Parties

Although political parties and activities of a political nature were prohibited during the period of direct rule from 1960 to 1963 and continue to be outlawed under the *panchayat* system (by the Associations and Organizations (control) Act of April 12, 1963), parties and their leaders still have an important, if secondary role. Moreover, King Mahendra is reported to have stated that the ban on parties would remain in effect "no longer than necessary," and it is speculated that they may be reinstated by 1967. Should they be allowed to reappear, it would probably be under terms of close royal surveillance.

With few exceptions, political parties have consisted of groups of people united by a leader and the desire to enjoy the fruits of power and political office rather than by any dedication to common principles and the achievement of shared objectives. Personalities have been decisive; ideological concerns, negligible. Regional or economic interests, occupation, caste and ethnic affiliation have not been particularly important as central organizing principles for political parties, and a wide variety of backgrounds is represented among the adherents of almost all of them.

Since the only constant objective of most of the parties—reportedly there were at one time 69—has been to win control of government office, they have been characteristically fluid in their membership and inconstant in their loyalties. Fragmentation and recombination according to the circumstances of the moment have been the outstanding aspects of their behavior. Alliances of convenience between them have been frequent expedients and have been brought about more often by mutual antagonism than by agreement of positive aims. This circumstance has made the parties particularly prone to manipulation by the King, and, with the exception of the Nepali Congress, they have had neither the organizational strength nor the public support which would enable them to resist him. Recognition of their weakness and of the King's control of all political rewards caused most party leaders to conclude at one time or another that it was more profitable to cooperate with him than to risk the loss of everything by persisting in opposition.

Nepali Congress

The major challenge to the power of the throne in early 1964 came from the Nepali Congress, which, as the nation's leading political party, stood to benefit most from the liberalization of politics and government which it advocated. The Congress, however, suffered from critical disabilities which prevented its acting as an effective opposition to the King. It was forced by the ban on political parties to operation from headquarters in exile in India, and its leader, B. P. Koirala, remained in prison.

A month after the royal coup the remnants of the Nepali Congress, including almost 40 members of Parliament, met at Patna, India, under the leadership of Subarna Shamsher and passed a resolution declaring that "what the King enjoys in Nepal is not original sovereignty but one derived from the people," and that "any attempt to convert it into an original sovereignty must mean rebellion against the real sovereignty that still resides with the people and their elected Parliament." It demanded that King Mahendra release all political prisoners, withdraw the ban on political parties, restore fundamental rights, and reconvene the Parliament.

In the months that followed, the Congress served as the nucleus around which other opposition groups clustered. Elements of numerous lesser political parties joined the Congress in early 1961, and the radical faction of the Communist Party headed by Pushpa Lal, which sought the violent overthrow of the monarchy, approached the Congress on the subject of alliance. The Communists' offer, however, was rejected. The most important addition to the strength of the exiles occurred in

January 1962 when Bharat Shamsher, leader of the Gorkha Parishad (the party which had won the second largest number of seats in the 1959 elections), joined the Nepali Congress, bringing to it important sources of funds and a party organization which still survives in Nepal.

In the fall of 1961 the exiles began to make raids across the Indian border into Nepal, attacking police posts, arsenals, tax and other government offices, and organizing uprisings among the people in the hills and the Tarai. The campaign reached its height in February 1962 with an attempt on the life of the King and continued without abatement for most of the rest of the year. Although the raids severely tested the Nepalese Army and police, their purpose appears to have been the relatively limited one of keeping pressure on the King for a compromise political settlement. In this they were unsuccessful, however, and their tactics may even have worked to the advantage of King Mahendra who, in charging India with complicity in the raids, was able to stigmatize the exiles as foreign agents and to mobilize support for his regime by appeal to nationalist, anti-Indian sentiment.

In October 1962, following the Chinese Communist invasion of India, Subarna Shamsher announced that the campaign against the King would be suspended. This move was taken to remove a serious point of friction between India and Nepal at a critical time and to eleminate any pretext for Chinese intervention in Nepal. At the beginning of 1964 the activities of the exiles against the royal government were still suspended.

The headquarters of the party-in-exile was under the direction of the able and widely respected Subarna Shamsher, but the neutralization of so popular a leader as Koirala has been a serious blow. In addition, much of its middle-grade leadership was lured away by King Mahendra and drawn into the government in early 1961. Although the organization of the Congress in the countryside survived the coup without serious damage, party workers are not inclined to risk the penalties of violating the laws against political activity.

A number of factors work strongly for the survival of the Congress. Primary among these is that it continues to be widely regarded in Nepal as the "party of the revolution"—the group with which the overthrow of the Ranas is most closely associated and which it therefore most closely identified in the public mind with the interests and welfare of the country. The Congress has also demonstrated a capacity to survive adversity. Although deprived of power from 1952 to 1958, it was gradually able to close its internal divisions, extend its organization, and maintain the loyalty of its members. The Congress possesses greater organizational strength than any other party, and, although largely dormant inside Nepal, it is still in existence. Moreover, its leadership, although weakened by defection and fettered by imprisonment and exile, remains strong. It is also the only party with a durable program and a clear commitment to a body of principles.

These considerations notwithstanding, it is unlikely that the Congress can wrest concessions from the King in the present circumstances, and the raids of 1962, if anything, hardened the monarch's postion. The prospects of a negotiated settlement are uncertain. Several unsuccessful efforts to come to agreement have been made since 1962.

The most important single impediment to any *détente* between the King and the Congress-in-exile is the disposition of political prisoners, particularly B. P. Koirala. Koirala is the only Nepalese figure whose stature is even remotely comparable to that of King, and he is his only serious rival for paramount leadership. The King, however, appears even less inclined now than he was in 1959-60 to share his power voluntarily. Nevertheless, internal development, particularly the evolution of the *panchayat* system, and also the course of the Sino-Indian rivalry will have a significant bearing on future relations between King Mahendra and the Congress.

Communist Party

The proscription of political parties in 1960 affected the Communist Party less severely than any other. The experience it acquired in operating underground while outlawed from 1952 to 1956 enabled it to make the transition to covert activity more smoothly than other groups. Moreover, little effort was made to detain Communist leaders, and in the months following the coup the Party was allowed to operate with a perceptibly greater amount of freedom than any other. It was unable to exploit the opportunity thus presented because of internal dissensions over fundamental questions of party policy which ultimately led to its division into two separate factions. One wing of the party, led by Keshar Jang Raimajhi, held that under prevailing conditions the Party should accept and support the monarchy and the present system and work within it for the achievement of party objectives. The other faction, headed by Pushpa Lal and Tulsilal Amatya, advocated the overthrow, by violence if necessary, of the "feudalistic" regime of the King and the alliance of the party in exile with the Nepali Congress. The split became final in May 1962 when the radical faction under Pushpa Lal met in Banaras, India, expelled the moderate members, and set up a separate party structure. The moderate faction reciprocated in September 1962 when, meeting in Katmandu, it expelled the radicals.

Superficially, this split in the Nepalese Communist Party seems to reflect the current crisis of ideology within the Communist world. Disagreement over whether the international orientation of Nepalese Communists should be toward Peiping or Moscow is not the primary cause of the Party's disunity. Although the ideological strife between China and the Soviet Union has affected the Nepalese Communist Party, the origins of the rift in the party are essentially domestic. Moreover, the conflict between China and India and their rivalry for preeminence in Asia, particularly in the Himalayan area, is of much greater concern to Nepal's Communists than is China's controversy with the Soviet Union. On this issue, both the Raimajhi and the Pushpa Lal groups have been firmly and consistently anti-Indian.

Class and Professional Organizations

Within the structure of the *panchayat* system are six classes and professional organizations which cover the categories of workers, peasants, women, children and students, ex-servicemen, and college graduates. These groups are organized in identical hierarchies which correspond to the organization of the *panchayats* themselves, with units at the village, district, zonal and national levels. At the village level every citizen is to be a member of at least one of these groups, whichever is most appropriate to his status or occupation, and is entitled to vote for its executive body. Indirect elections are to choose the members of the plenary and executive bodies at the higher levels, and the national executive bodies are each to select members of the National Panchayat (see ch. 11, Constitution and Government).

An important implied purpose of the class and professional organizations is to serve as substitutes for the prohibited political parties. According to the government, although the social and occupational groups comprised by the class and professional organizations were the foundation of the nation's political parties, the parties, in the pursuit of their own objectives, distorted and manipulated rather than advanced their interests. Officials of the Ministry of National Guidance—the agency charged with the general supervision of *panchayat* development from 1961 to 1963—have stated that by stripping away the parties and providing a formal organizational structure for these groups, they may now work more directly and effectively on behalf of their common interests and concerns. They are to be the primary channels for the articulation of group interests, the coordination of individual endeavor with class and national objectives, the stimulation and expression of "class consciousness," and the participation of each group in the implementation of the development program.

The class and professional organizations have also been warned repeatedly against engaging in any kind of political activity. They are not permitted to contest *panchayat* elections, and their members may not do so as representatives of the organizations but only as individuals. The Minister of National Guidance has declared that even at such time as the ban on political parties is lifted, their members will not be allowed to run for the elective offices of the class and professional organizations, in order to keep the "stream of democracy . . . unsullied and undefiled." It is difficult, however, to perceive how the class and professional organizations can accomplish their stated task without becoming involved in activities of a fundamentally political nature and without in effect playing the role of political parties. Moreover, the internal impulses which may be expected to propel them in this direction could probably be curbed only by such extensive governmental restraints that they would become instruments of control rather than means of public expression.

Potential Opposition

There are several elements in the society which, at the very least, have been unenthusiastic over the continuance of royal control and the establishment of the *panchayat* system. These elements, which are identified with neither the Nepali Congress nor the Communist Party, as yet show nothing more than a general sense of dissatisfaction with the state of affairs and have not taken any organized form. As a result, they elude precise identification and description.

Political leaders prominent in the 1950's who had expected some improvement in their fortunes following the expulsion of the Nepali Congress government have been disappointed with their relatively unimportant role in the *panchayat* system and have made cautious but largely unsuccessful efforts to expand their influence. Former Prime Minister Tanka Prasad Acharya, leader of the small Praja Parishad (People's Party), which made a very poor showing in the 1959 elections, has been the most active in these endeavors, seeking, along with members of other parties, the King's permission to form a "country-wide non-political organization on a democratic basis." Unsuccessful, he later attacked the government for suppressing all parties for the faults of only the Nepali Congress and demanded that the ban on other parties be lifted. The leaders of the moderate faction of the Communist Party have adopted a similar approach, calling for the formation of a united front movement.

By the summer of 1963 the disgruntlement of this group had begun to take somewhat more tangible shape. Shortly after the National Panchayat was convened, complaints began to be voiced by certain of its members that the absence of parties created a "political vacuum" in Nepal which should be filled by the formation of a "National Front" group.

More substantial action was initiated by K. I. Singh, who resigned as chairman of the Council of State in April 1963 and announced that he would instigate a civil disobedience movement against the government. It was later reported that he was to be joined by Acharya, Dilli Raman Regmi, a former foreign minister and leader of the Nepali National

Congress party—another small party which had failed to attract a significant following in the 1959 election—and by Surya Prasad Upadhyaya, one of the leaders of the Nepali Congress, in the establishment of a group called Deliverance from Crisis (Sankat Mochan). In their dealings with the King they have argued that the prime ministership ought to be held by someone who commands a majority in the National Panchayat, which implies the return of one of the preconditions for a party system. They have also demanded the release of political prisoners and the restoration of fundamental rights. They were reported to be concerned over the "lack of appreciation of the leadership of . . . former leaders."

Young people, particularly Western-educated intellectuals, constitute no immediate source of opposition to King Mahendra, but they have been notably apathetic and cynical toward his regime and the *panchayat* system. The King has exerted himself to win acceptance, but if their feeling of alienation should persist and if unemployment of the educated —now minimal—continues, they could become an important focus of opposition to the present regime.

ELECTIONS

There have been only two elections of broad, national significance: the general elections of 1959 and the elections to local assemblies in 1962. Although there had been elections before 1959, they were not nationwide but were for a few municipal governments or, in the areas where local elections were customary, for village councils. Since 1959 all elections have taken place within the framework of the *panchayat* system, and by the beginning of 1964 one round of elections had been held at each of the four levels of the structure.

General Elections of 1959

The general elections of 1959 were regulated by the Constitution of 1959 and the People's Representation Act of 1958 and were conducted under the supervision of the Electoral Commission. There were 109 single-member districts, and candidates were permitted to stand for Parliament simultaneously in more than one constituency. Any citizen over 25 years of age could become a candidate, and any citizen over 21 years of age who was not disqualified by insanity, conviction for treason, other crimes, or other grounds, was entitled to vote. Out of a total population of almost 10 million, somewhat over 4 million were eligible to vote in 1959.

The task of carrying out the elections was complicated by a shortage of personnel, by the need to educate the people beforehand in the mechanics and significance of voting, and by difficulties of transportation and communications. Even with the assistance of communications units, loaned by the Indian and British Armies, it was 3 months before the elections were completed.

Political campaigning began in the fall of 1958 and consisted of rallies, processions and the distribution of propaganda leaflets. To be recognized by the Electoral Commission a party had to run candidates in at least 21 districts; 11 parties were recognized, but by election time one had decided to boycott it and another had failed to produce the required number of candidates. Of the remaining 9 parties, only 1—the Nepali Congress—had the financial resources and organizational scope to campaign on a nationwide scale, and it had a candidate in every district. Only 3 other parties contested seats in more than half the districts. There were 864 candidates, 339 of whom ran as independents and the remainder were affiliated with one of the 9 parties. Approximately 1.8 million people voted—45 percent of the electorate—in an orderly and well-conducted election.

A conspicuous feature of the elections was the elimination of many of the small parties and the emergence of only 4 major ones. The Nepali Congress took 74 of the 109 seats with 37 percent of the popular vote; the Gorkha Parishad, 19 seats with 17 percent of the popular vote; the United Democratic Party, 5 seats and 10 percent of the vote; and the Communist Party of Nepal, 4 seats and 7 percent of the vote. These 4 parties controlled 102 (93 percent) of the 109 seats. A corollary of the poor showing of the smaller parties was the almost total failure of the large number of candidates who ran as independents; of 339, only 4 were elected to office.

Also noteworthy was the extent to which much of the political leadership of the preceding 9 years was repudiated by the voters. Both former prime ministers who stood for office, K. I. Singh and K. P. Acharya, were defeated, and the third, M. P. Koirala, did not run. Other losing candidates were D. R. Regmi, president of the Nepali National Congress and a former foreign minister, and the two top leaders of the Communist Party, Pushpa Lal and Keshar Jang Raimajhi.

Panchayat Elections

By the beginning of 1964 there had been four sets of elections under the *panchayat* system. Village elections—for slates of candidates nominated by the central government—were held during the winter of 1961–62, and town elections during the summer. Elections at the district level were held at the beginning of 1963 and were followed immediately by elections at the zonal and then at the national level. Special legislation governs elections at each stage of the system.

Direct elections take place only at the local level—villages and towns—in the *panchayat* system; all higher bodies are formed by indirect election, each being selected by and from the one subordinate to it. It seems, however, that village and town elections had little effect on the traditional structure of local authority and that, though most people took part in them, interest was not high and was less so at the higher levels where electoral procedures were indirect.

CHAPTER 13

FOREIGN RELATIONS

After centuries of isolation Nepal has evolved a foreign policy which may be described as a modified neutralism. This policy has been consistently applied in the cold war between the Communist and non-Communist powers. Its effectiveness has been threatened but not impaired from time to time, particularly during periods of tension between neighboring India and Communist China. As of the beginning of 1964, relations with the Indian Government were cordial, and authorities in each country, apparently recognizing the mutual advantages derived from close cooperation in defense and economic matters, seemed determined to continue them in the same pattern. Relations with Communist China were also cordial, and high officials in both countries have repeatedly asserted that all the outstanding problems between them have been amicably solved.

In public pronouncements regarding foreign policy and foreign relations, Nepalese leaders stress the themes of independence, national honor, nonalignment and nonentanglement in the cold war. The politically informed sector of the population is proud of the country's aloofness which, it believes, has enabled Nepal to retain its independence over the centuries. This traditionally neutralist attitude was easily preserved during the long period of isolation which ended when the British withdrew from India. Until then contacts with foreigners were either prohibited or discouraged, and, at that time, official relations with foreign countries were limited to those with Tibet, the United States, France and Great Britain, including the British Government in India. After the withdrawal of British power, the Nepalese Government, seeking to protect its independence, abandoned its isolationist policy, established close relations with India, started discussions with diplomatic representatives of other countries and, most important, applied for membership in the United Nations.

By the end of 1963, Nepal had established relations with more than 30 countries, including at least six Communist states. The official representatives from most of these countries were concerned largely with trade and economic development programs. Meanwhile, strict adherence to the policy of modified neutralism had been seriously threatened by two major Chinese Communist operations: the invasion of Tibet in 1950 and aggression against the Indian frontier in 1962. Throughout this period, Nepal, maintaining a strictly neutralist attitude in the Peiping-New Delhi clashes, has even strengthened its ties with India while not weakening those with Communist China. The success achieved in the field of foreign relations is evidenced by the offer and acceptance of aid from countries such as India, Communist China, the Soviet Union, the United States, Israel and Pakistan—countries with widely divergent interests and viewpoints.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For centuries Nepal has faced the problems of a small, weak country situated in a mountainous area surrounded by two powerful neighbors. From its beginning as a unified state under the reign of Prithvi Narayan Shah (r. 1742–75) until the end of the Rana period in 1951, the rulers coped with this precarious situation by adopting general policies of isolationism and of neutralism. Also, to retain their independent status, they attempted to balance Chinese against British power in the Himalayan region. The isolationist policy, adhered to with British approval and cooperation, virtually excluded Europeans from the country. Contacts with foreign governments and peoples were held to a minimum (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

From 1790 until 1912 the country's only direct diplomatic relations were with Great Britain, Tibet and China. Relations with China ended in 1912 with the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty. Thereafter, until the British withdrew from the area in 1947, direct relations were maintained only with them and with the autonomous Tibetan Government. Contacts with other countries were conducted indirectly through the Government of British India. Since the British withdrawal, Nepal has conducted its foreign relations independently.

Until the 1920's, when the government began to allow some mountaineering teams to enter the country, foreign visitors were limited to those permitted—usually at the request of the British representative in Katmandu—to hunt tigers in the Tarai or to tour the cultural centers in the Katmandu Valley. Even the British representative in Katmandu had few contacts other than those with government officials. Western visitors were kept under strict surveillance and could meet Nepalese only after obtaining special permission. Foreigners were not allowed to use most travel routes, and Katmandu could be reached only over the most difficult trail leading into the town from the Tarai. When the trade routes leading across the country between India and Tibet were closed to Europeans, the British opened a new one from India to Tibet through Sikkim and the Chumbi Valley. The Nepalese apparently were willing to sacrifice certain economic advantages obtained from the Indo-Tibetan trade for the small degree of military security which might result from the policy of isolation.

The attempt to balance Chinese against British power proved less successful. As long as the Chinese Government was dominant in the area the Nepalese seemed to favor its suzerainty over Tibet. In fact, Nepal's tributary relationship with China, established in the Sino-Nepalese Treaty of 1792, was maintained long after China ceased to have the power to enforce it. This nebulous relationship, however, seemed to have advantages that more than offset its disadvantages, particularly since China refrained from interfering with Nepalese domestic affairs.

By 1850, when the power of Great Britain was increasing in the area at the time that the power of a China torn by internal strife was decreasing, Nepal's independence could be assured only with the concurrence of British authorities in India. As a part of Great Britain's "buffer state" system, Nepal served as a safeguard against encroachments by any power on northern India. The British policy was to refrain from incorporating the buffer states into the Empire, and to allow them virtual autonomy over their domestic affairs in exchange for British guidance in their foreign relations. Moreover, the British were aware that an attempt to rule Nepal could be a costly venture because of the country's rugged terrain and the superb fighting qualities of the Nepalese soldier (see ch. 2, Historical Setting; and ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

In 1947 the British withdrawal and an increasing Chinese Communist threat in Tibet forced Nepalese leaders to make a radical reorientation in their attitude toward foreign relations. The isolation policy was discarded and the balance-of-power principle was expanded to include diplomatic relationship with all countries that sought Nepal's friendship. From 1947 to 1950 the Rana government's foreign policy seemed to have two objectives: to develop relations with friendly countries as one means of protecting Nepal's independence and to establish relations with the new Indian Government similar to those previously maintained with the British in India.

The threat to the country's security imposed by the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet in 1950 and the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1951 were major factors in a further modification of Nepalese foreign policy. Since King Tribhuvan and his supporters were obligated to India for their rise to power, they understandably had pro-Indian sentiments and looked to India for guidance (see ch. 2, Historical Setting). Nepal's foreign policy, as enunciated by King Tribhuvan and his successor, King Mahendra, has been based on the Indian "neutralist" model, with stress placed on its independent outlook and nonalignment with any of the world's power blocs so as to be free from foreign pressures and influence. The term "neutralist" is usually avoided lest it might imply a return to the old isolationist policy—a reversion, however, which is vigorously denied by assertions that Nepal, a landlocked country, must promote its international relations in various fields. Statements regarding nonalignment with world power groups apparently refer only to Western and Communist blocs, as the country in

1955 sent representatives to the first Bandung conference held by a group of states usually called the Afro-Asian bloc.

In general, the Rana regime's policy in the late 1940's of seeking friendly relations with other countries has been maintained and even expanded, but for a somewhat different reason. The Rana government apparently desired foreign relationships in part, at least, to seek support abroad that could serve as a counter to a possibly unfriendly government in India. The principal objective under the restored monarchy seems to be to obtain assistance of various types to aid in economic and social development without incurring political obligations.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER NATIONS

Great Britain

Nepalese relations with Great Britain began in the eighteenth century after the East India Company extended its activities into the Himalayan region. The first recorded official contact was in 1766, when the Newar king of Katmandu applied to the British for military assistance against the Gurkha invaders who were enveloping the Katmandu Valley. Later, when the victorious Gurkha advanced eastward and southward, they were in continued contact and conflict with the East India Company. In a commercial treaty signed in 1792, at the time of the Chinese invasion, the Nepalese Government agreed to give special trade rights to agents of the East India Company, but Nepal's request for British military aid against the invading Chinese was rejected. A British officer was sent to Katmandu to serve as a mediator between the opposing forces and to negotiate further trade concessions from Nepal. The British continued to press for expanded commercial relations and the right to maintain a permanent diplomatic agent (Resident) in Katmandu (see ch. 2, Historical Setting, and ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

Relations with Great Britain reached a critical stage in 1800, when the Nepalese king, the victim of a successful coup, fled to India. The British granted him refuge, loaned him funds and seemingly made preparations to help him regain the throne. The coup government, apprehensive over the turn of events, in October 1801 agreed to sign a new treaty which reaffirmed the commercial treaty of 1792 and permitted the British to establish a Residency in the capital. The coup government was itself overthrown in 1802 and the new government, opposing the treaty of 1801, resented the presence of the British Resident so openly that he returned to India in 1803, whereupon the British Viceroy of India repudiated the treaty of 1801.

During the next decade, relations with the British became increasingly strained because of bitter disputes over sovereign powers in certain Tarai areas. Open warfare started in 1814, but when British forces approached Katmandu the Nepalese admitted defeat and, in 1816, signed the first Treaty of Sagauli. The Treaty allowed the British to establish a Residency in the capital. It also reduced Nepal's territory to approximately its present boundaries, and gave the British some control over Nepalese foreign contacts (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

Since the arrival of their second Resident in 1816, the British have had continuous official representation in Katmandu. British recruitment of Gurkha volunteers began during this period, but frictions between the Governments of Nepal and of British India occasionally threatened to develop into open warfare. The Nepalese, apparently resenting their loss of Tarai lands, repeatedly made forays into various disputed districts and tried to develop an anti-British sentiment among some of the Indian princes.

When the Rana family came to power in 1846 they adopted a new foreign policy, the basic principle of which was the maintenance of good relations with the Government of British India. Threats of war between the two countries receded. Although Nepal's offer of military assistance to the British in 1848, during the Second Sikh War, was declined, similar offers were readily accepted in later years, particularly to help suppress the Indian Mutiny of 1857, and again during World War I and World War II (see ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

Friendly relations generally prevailed during the period of Rana rule (1846–1951), as attested by numerous treaties and agreements. Nepal was allowed virtually complete autonomy in internal affairs in exchange for British leadership in foreign relations. In 1852 a treaty provided for the apprehension and extradition of fugitive criminals—a problem, particularly in the case of political refugees, which had been plaguing both governments for some time. In 1855 another treaty guaranteed that British subjects attached to the Residency in Katmandu would be tried only by the British Resident for violations of Nepalese law. In 1860 still another treaty restored to Nepal a tract of Tarai territory on the Oudh frontier which had been ceded to Britain in 1816.

A prolonged period of tranquillity in Nepalese-British relations was interrupted in 1885 by the assassination of Prime Minister Rana Udip Singh. This created a crisis which aroused bitter quarrels within the Rana family over the line of succession. In accordance with their traditional practice, the British recognized the successful contender and his new government once they were securely in power. In return, the new prime minister legalized British recruitment of Gurkha for the British Indian Army. Thenceforth, all Rana prime ministers sought unofficial British confirmation before assuming the powers of their office.

Except for a similar crisis in 1901 the friendly relations, unmarred by serious problems, brought certain military and commercial advantages to Great Britain and generous monetary rewards to Nepal. In

1919 the Government of British India granted an annual subsidy of NR1 million (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary) to the Government of Nepal. This was in addition to the large sums entering the Nepalese economy by way of pensions, allotments, and remittances of various sorts from soldiers or ex-soldiers in the British Gurkha forces (see ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

In 1920 the post of Resident was raised to British Envoy to the Court of Nepal, thus elevating Nepal from the category of an Indian princely state, in which the British Resident was the ultimate authority. In furtherance of the concept that relations between the two countries were, theoretically at least, between two independent states, in 1925 both governments ratified the second Treaty of Sagauli. This treaty, besides confirming the 1815 first Treaty of Sagauli and all subsequent existing treaties, reasserted the internal and external independence of both governments. Despite these expressions, relationships between the two powers remained virtually unchanged until India's independence in 1947.

During the rebellion of 1950–51 the British attitude toward the struggle tended to follow Indian leadership as soon as the Rana government lost control of the country. Since 1951, Nepal's official discussions with Great Britain seem to be centered on Gurkha affairs (see ch. 22, The Armed Forces). Relations continue to be good, with diplomatic representation being maintained at ambassadorial level. The King and Queen of Nepal went to London on a state visit in October 1960, and this was followed, in February 1961, by the visit of Queen Elizabeth II of England to Katmandu.

India

For 3 years after India achieved independence, Nepalese-Indian relations continued to be based on the 1925 Treaty of Sagauli signed with the Government of British India. Since 1950 relations have been based on two treaties—the Treaty of Peace and Friendship and the Treaty of Trade and Commerce—both negotiated that year between representatives of the Rana government and the Republic of India. Under the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, ratified in July, each government agreed to acknowledge and respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the other; to continue diplomatic relations with the other; and, on matters pertaining to industrial and economic development, to grant rights equal to those of its own citizens to the nationals of the other residing in its territory. Furthermore, agreements on all subjects dealt with in this treaty were to supersede those on similar matters dealt with in previous treaties between Nepal and the Government of British India. In the Treaty of Trade and Commerce, ratified in October, India recognized Nepal's right to import and export commodities through Indian territory and ports. Customs were not to be levied on commodities while in transit through India. Both treaties reflected India's desire for a friendly and stable government in Nepal.

During the revolt against the Rana regime in 1950–51, India advised both sides in the conflict and played a leading role in negotiating the terms of peace. The Rana representatives finally accepted India's proposed reorganization of Nepal's political structure and agreed to restore King Tribhuvan to the throne and to recognize him as the King of Nepal. The King approved the proposals immediately. The Nepali Congress party leaders, after considerable persuasion by the Indian Government and some further negotiations with the Rana regime, finally acceded to the compromise plan.

Since 1951, India's policy apparently is to assist Nepal in establishing a stable, popular government that will develop a sound political, administrative and social system, capable of withstanding internal and external subversive forces. This policy seems to be acceptable to the Nepalese ruling powers, despite repeated accusations by political opposition groups that it involves undue Indian interference with both internal and external affairs.

Besides benefiting from the advice of a military mission since 1952, Nepalese authorities repeatedly have requested and received military aid from India to help suppress bandit gangs and armed political dissenters. Railroad and highway transport facilities in northern India have been made available, on occasions, to move Nepalese troops from one area to another in the country by an Indian route (see ch. 21, Public Order and Internal Security; and ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

Close relationships between the two countries are further attested to by the presence since 1952 of a mission to administer India's Economic and Technical Aid Program. Apart from the mission administrators are numerous technicians, specialists and advisers to assist Nepalese ministries and other agencies charged with executing the Program (see ch. 16, Character and Structure of the Economy).

Nepalese authorities, on the whole, have a high regard for Indian advice. Government leaders, when confronted with serious problems, frequently visit New Delhi to seek counsel from the Indian Government and apparently, on occasions, to obtain approval or support for proposed policies or plans. A possible exception to this practice occurred in 1960, when the King dismissed his Cabinet, banned all political activities and assumed direct control of the government, reportedly without consulting Indian authorities. Prime Minister Nehru seemed to be surprised and expressed disapproval of the action, stating that it was a "setback to democracy." Even representatives from dissident groups of all types have obtained advice from sympathizers in India, either in or out of government service. Indian authorities have functioned as intermediaries between various political groups, sometimes exerting a moderating influence on the parties involved, particularly when their activities seemed to endanger governmental stability. Almost all of India's efforts in this respect have brought vociferous accusations of "interference," "domination" and "a threat to Nepal's sovereignty." Anti-Indian sentiment has been aroused on occasions and, in several instances, has been manifested by demonstrations. For example, when an Indian parliamentary delegation visited Katmandu in May 1954 on a goodwill mission it was agreed by hostile crowds who threw garbage at the delegates and stones at the Ambassador's car. Nepalese officials contended that the demonstration was promoted by unemployed politicians who, in their frustration, blamed India for their plight.

Relations with the Indian Government began to be somewhat strained in 1961 after the flight of dismissed politicians to that country where they organized a strong opposition movement, and by the end of 1961 they were supporting armed raids across the border into Nepal. As the tempo of activities intensified, Nepalese officials became resentful toward India for giving asylum to the exiles and providing them with bases and material support for operations against Nepal.

The increase in strained relations was marked by an anti-Indian demonstration on January 26, 1962, in front of the Indian Embassy at Katmandu. On April 17, Nepal's Ministry of National Guidance issued a 60-page pamphlet charging that rebels operating from Indian bases were conducting raids into Nepalese territory. The King, after threatening to take the question of India's encouragement of the raids to the United Nations, sent his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rishikesh Shah, to New Delhi early in September 1962 for talks with Prime Minister Nehru, Minister of Defense Krishna Menon and other Cabinet ministers. He also appealed to the Indian Government to stop giving support to the armed opposition movement.

After this protest the tempo of antigovernment operations subsided. This was due in part to Indian pressure on the émigré Nepalese political leaders to desist from actions against the Nepalese Government that threatened to demoralize Nepal's internal security forces. More important, however, was a decision of the émigré leaders themselves to cease their militant activities in face of a mounting Chinese Communist threat in the Himalayan region (see ch. 12, Political Dynamics; ch. 21, Public Order and Internal Security).

By the beginning of 1963 relations with India showed significant improvement as manifested by frequent exchanges of visits by high government officials. In addition, the threat imposed by the Chinese Communist aggressions against the Indian northern frontier seemed to draw the two countries together. King Mahendra and Minister of Foreign

Affairs Tulsi Giri, while on an official visit to India late in January 1963, asserted to the press that Indo-Nepalese relations were very good and were rapidly improving. In February the Indian Minister of Home Affairs, on a 4-day goodwill visit to Katmandu, stressed the close cooperation of the two countries in defense arrangements and in joint economic undertakings. Prime Minister Nehru, at the King's invitation, visited Nepal in April, primarily to observe the satisfactory progress being made on numerous Indian aid program projects. In August the King and Queen made a 3-day state visit to India; in return, in November, India's President visited Nepal at the invitation of the King.

India, seeking to maintain its prestige and influence with the leaders in the Nepalese Government, tends to be highly sensitive regarding their relations with other countries, particularly those with Communist China and Pakistan. A potentially serious irritant in Indo-Nepalese relations is the favorable publicity accorded in Nepal to the Chinese Communists because of their work on the Katmandu-Kodari road, not scheduled to be completed before 1966. Moreover, some Indian officials contend that the road will facilitate the influx of Chinese Communist agents and propaganda.

China and Tibet

The country's first recorded official relations with China and Tibet occurred about the middle of the seventh century A.D., when it was visited by Tibetan King, Srong-btsan Sgam-po, who then dominated large areas in China and in the Himalayan region. After the eighth century, missions reportedly were exchanged with China during periods when strong imperialist rulers exercised some sort of lordship over Nepal. This relationship would lapse, however, sometimes for several centuries, when China's rule was weakened by internal dissension or by the threat of foreign invasion (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

During the eighteenth century, when the Gurkha kings were expanding their power throughout the area now known as Nepal, they ventured into Tibet and, in 1790, captured Zhikatse (Shigatse) on the Brahmaputra River, 250 miles northeast of Katmandu. The Tibetans appealed to their Chinese overlords for aid, and in 1791 the Manchu Emperor responded with a large military force which ejected the Nepalese, invaded Nepal and threatened to occupy the Katmandu Valley. The Chinese, with overextended supply lines, welcomed the Nepalese plea for peace. The ensuing, vaguely worded Sino-Nepalese Treaty of 1792 provided for tribute-bearing missions from Nepal and Tibet to China every 5 years "in token of their filial love." Furthermore, it stipulated that China henceforth should be regarded as "father to both Nepal and Tibet."

The Nepalese, Chinese and British all gave different interpretations to the Treaty, particularly to the degree of Chinese sovereign rights in Nepal. When the Rana family came to power, their maharajas tended to reject China's claim of overlordship, contending that the vassal status of Nepal was an unwarranted fiction and a damaging reflection on the country's honor and independence. The Chinese, nevertheless, held the view that they had the right to intervene in Nepalese affairs, if they so desired. In practice, however, they adhered to a policy of noninterference. The primary desire of China seemed to be the receipt of the quinquennial tribute, and in the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1814–16 the Chinese even refused to respond to the Nepalese request for military assistance. Thus China, by default, surrendered its dominant position in Nepal to the growing British influence there. Moreover, the Nepalese seemed content to retain the tributary relationship as an expedient for balancing China against Great Britain and thus retaining an independent status. The presence of Chinese power in Tibet, maintaining a vigilance over the situation in Nepal and still claiming certain rights over the country, undoubtedly helped prevent its absorption into the British Empire in India during the nineteenth century.

After the Sino-Nepalese Treaty of 1792, relations with Tibet were seldom friendly. Nepal complained that its quinquennial mission to China did not receive the protection to which it was entitled in Tibet. Also, the Nepalese maintained that their traders, merchants and pilgrims were treated unfairly by Tibetan authorities. Furthermore, the Treaty gave to Tibet some territory in the main border passes that formerly was controlled by Nepal.

In 1854, Nepal saw an opportunity to redress its grievances while China was preoccupied with internal dissensions and Great Britain was fighting Russia in the Crimean War. A large Nepalese army invaded Tibet but was unable to win a decisive victory. Tibetan peace overtures were welcomed, and, in March 1856, the Treaty of Thapathali was signed, with the Chinese mediating the agreement. Under the Treaty both governments pledged to "regard the Emperor of China with respect." Nepal agreed to assist Tibet against invasion by any foreign power. Tibet, besides agreeing to pay NR10,000 annually to Nepal and granting complete freedom of trade to Nepalese subjects, conceded extraterritorial rights to Nepalese living in Lhasa and gave Nepal the right to maintain a representative in Lhasa (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

Relations between Nepal and China and Tibet continued without critical incidents until 1904, when the British sent an armed expedition into Tibet. At that time China was undergoing serious internal strife and was unable to challenge the expansion of British influence in the area. Nepal, despite its obligation under the Treaty of Thapathali of 1856 to assist Tibet if it were attacked by a foreign power, rejected Tibet's request for aid, because it did not wish to risk its good relations with Great Britain. In fact, Nepal supplied the British expedition with yaks and porters. Meanwhile, Nepal had stopped paying quinquennial tribute to China in 1908.

By 1910, apprehensive of British activity in Tibet, China reasserted its claim to sovereign rights in Tibet and feudatory powers in Nepal. This claim was rejected by Nepalese Maharaja Chandra Shamsher who, in 1912, warned the Chinese representative at Lhasa that Nepal would help Tibet attain an independent status by all means approved by the British Government in India. Nepal broke relations with China when the Tibetans, taking advantage of the Chinese Revolution of 1911–12, drove the Chinese out of their country. The break continued until 1955, when relations were reestablished with the Chinese Communist regime.

In 1950, when the Chinese Communists invaded Tibet, Nepal's relations with that country began to undergo drastic changes. Although the annual Tibetan tribute mission appeared regularly in Nepal as late as 1953, the Peiping regime had started to ignore the provisions of the 1856 treaty by curtailing the privileges and rights it accorded to Nepalese traders, by imposing restrictions on Nepalese pilgrims and by stopping the Tibetan tributary missions. There was a mounting pressure by the Chinese Communists to "regularize" relations between the two countries to conform to Tibet's new status in the People's Republic of China.

The first step was the establishment of diplomatic relations with Communist China; negotiations to this end started in 1954. After a delay caused by the change of government in Nepal in February 1955, an agreement was signed on August 1 to exchange diplomatic representatives. According to the agreement, relations between the two countries are based on five principles: mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; noninterference in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; peaceful coexistence; and nonaggression. The Nepalese Ambassador to India was also to serve as Ambassador to Communist China, and the Chinese Communist Ambassador to India was to serve as Ambassador to Nepal. On August 3, the Chinese Communist Ambassador presented his credentials to the King. It was not until July 1960 that the two countries established resident ambassadors in their respective capitals.

In 1956 Treaty concerning Tibet, replacing the Thapathali Treaty of 1856, was signed on September 20, 1956. Under the 1956 Treaty, Nepal recognized Chinese Communist sovereignty over Tibet and agreed to surrender all privileges and rights granted by the old treaty, including the NR10,000 annual tribute from Tibet. The new treaty also entitled the Chinese Communists to open a consulate general in Katmandu and three trading agencies at suitable points in the interior of Nepal.

In 1962, Nepal withdrew its ambassador from Tibet, substituted a consul general instead, and retained four trade agents, one each at Lhasa, Nyalam Dzong (Kuti), Girang Dzong (Kyirong) and Zhikatse (Shigatse).

The establishment of diplomatic relations with Communist China and the agreement on Tibet opened the way for further conferences, joint declarations and agreements in a wide variety of fields. First, agreements regarding the location and demarcation of the Nepal-Tibetan boundary were signed between March 11 and 24, 1960, by Prime Minister Bishweshar Prasad Koirala and Premier Chou En-lai at Peiping. Within a month the same officials concluded a Treaty of Peace and Friendship, which they signed on April 28 at Katmandu. The anniversary date of this treaty has been used by the Chinese Communist Ambassador in Katmandu as the occasion for propaganda and for a reception attended by the King and Queen and high government officials.

A treaty publicized as the Sino-Nepalese Boundary Treaty was signed on October 5, 1961 at Peiping by King Mahendra and Lui Shao-chi, Chairman of the People's Republic of China. The Treaty provided for the Sino-Nepal Joint Boundary Commission to agree upon questions regarding alignment, location and maintenance of the 79 demarcation markers. Its findings were attached to the original treaty in a protocol signed at Peiping on January 20, 1963, by the foreign ministers, Chen Yi and Tulsi Giri. The wide publicity given to the event stressed the "achievements of friendly discussions on the basis of mutual respect between independent nations having different political and social systems."

On October 15, 1961, the foreign ministers of the two countries signed an agreement at Peiping to construct a motor road linking Katmandu with Tibet. This agreement and the Chinese Communist assistance in road construction are cited by authorities in both countries as another example of cooperation on projects that promote friendship between the two countries. Additional favorable publicity was given to the project on January 14, 1963, when both foreign ministers signed a protocol to the original agreement in Peiping (see ch. 19, Industry and Trade).

After the major Chinese Communist aggression against India, beginning on October 20, 1962, Nepal, apparently seeking to avoid involvement in the struggle, reasserted its neutrality. A Nepalese warning that the country would not submit to aggression from any state apparently was directed at the Chinese Communists as an attack from any other source appeared very unlikely. Meanwhile, Nepal's continued support of Communist China's application for membership in the United Nations helped to maintain friendly relations on a mutual basis.

Spokesmen of both countries emphasize the importance of the frequent interchange of official visits as a contribution to understanding between the two peoples. At the invitation of the Peiping regime the chairman of the National Panchayat, heading a sizable delegation from that body, made a 2-week tour of Communist China beginning October 24, 1963. Early in January 1964 a Chinese Communist film exhibition opened at Katmandu. A potential source of irritation in relations was relieved on January 13, 1964, when the Chinese Communists reportedly agreed to release from Tibetan banks the funds they had been holding in the accounts of some 200 Nepalese traders who, because of Peiping's stringent economic controls, had decided to return to Nepal.

The United States

Relations with the United States, in general, have been friendly and marked by frequent exchanges of official visits. Initial contacts were made in 1945 when some technical experts attached to the United States Foreign Economic Administration office at New Delhi were invited to Nepal for informal discussions regarding the country's economic development and the possibility of establishing direct trade relations with the United States. Meanwhile, the Nepalese Minister at London came to the United States. His visit was followed in July 1946 by a Nepalese goodwill mission headed by General Baber Shamsher, then Minister of Defense in the Rana government. In November the United States Chargé d'Affaires at New Delhi visited Nepal and decorated Maharaja Padma Shamsher in recognition of the services rendered by Gurkha soldiers to the Allied cause in World War II. Finally, an American delegation went to Katmandu in April 1947 to formulate an agreement which could serve as the basis for initiating commercial relations between the two countries.

This preliminary document, signed on April 25 by the ranking delegate and Maharaja Padma Shamsher, provided for further consultations to arrange the details for exchanging diplomatic and consular representatives. The two parties agreed that: initially, representation was to be at legation level, with the Nepalese Ambassador to London to serve also as Minister to the United States, and the United States Ambassador to New Delhi to serve concurrently as Minister to Nepal; each country was to guarantee a minimum standard of treatment for the nationals of one country visiting or residing in the other; future commercial relations between the two countries were to be conducted according to the most-favored-nation clause (see Glossary). Diplomatic exchanges did not occur until about a year later when, in March 1948, the Nepalese Ambassador to London, General Kaiser Shamsher, presented his credentials to President Harry S. Truman, and in May the American Ambassador to New Delhi, Henry F. Grady, presented his credentials to King Tribhuvan.

Relations became somewhat complicated in 1950 by the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet and in 1951 by the overthrow of the Rana regime. During these disturbances, the United States manifested primary interest in the establishment of a strong and stable government capable of successfully resisting the expansion of Chinese Communist influence and power from Tibet. The victorious Nepali Congress party took a critical attitude toward Nepal's agreements with the United States, even making accusations of its intention to build air bases and military cantonments in western Nepal. Nevertheless, the United States, generally following India's lead, quickly recognized the Nepali Congress-Rana coalition government in 1951.

Nepal's diplomatic ties with the United States were strengthened and its international prestige enhanced in August 1951 when the two governments agreed to raise the status of their respective diplomatic representations to the rank of embassy. It was, however, August 1959 when each country established a resident embassy in the capital of the other country.

Meanwhile, the first agreement on American economic aid was signed on January 23, 1951, with representatives of the Rana regime. The new government, which came to power only a month later, indicated its desire for increased assistance. The aid program started slowly because basic plans had to be drawn up and decisions made on allocation of funds and effort. Since 1951, however, numerous agreements have been signed on a wide variety of economic projects, and by 1958 commitments totaled approximately $10.5 million. A major portion of the funds and effort have been expended on eradicating malaria, making geological surveys, promoting village development and cottage industry projects, constructing roads, improving agricultural practices, establishing an education program and providing scholarships for Nepalese to study in the United States (see ch. 6, Health and Welfare; ch. 7, Education; and ch. 19, Industry and Trade).

The Nepalese Government, on the whole, has supported the United States aid program and has cooperated with its administration by the United States Operations Mission. Nevertheless, the Mission's presence has at times aroused considerable criticism from certain Nepalese political elements. Some of the adverse comments, apparently from leftist sources, pertain to allegations that the Mission is engaged in espionage activities and that, despite the reported Indian approval of the economic aid projects, the United States is trying to lure Nepal away from India into close association with the "Western power bloc."

The Soviet Union

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after informal discussions with Soviet officials, announced on July 20, 1956, that diplomatic relations would be established with the Soviet Union at the embassy level. The Soviet Ambassador in New Delhi, accredited concurrently to Nepal, presented his credentials to the King on February 6, 1958. Relations were strengthened in the summer of 1958 during an official 3-week visit by the King and Queen to the Soviet Union. A joint communique issued by the King and Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev asserted that: relations between the countries would be based on the "five principles of noninterference and cooperation"; Nepal had accepted the Soviet Union's offer of economic aid; and President Kliment Efremovich Voroshilov had accepted the King's invitation to visit Nepal.

The Soviet Technical Mission arrived at Katmandu in February 1959 to initiate negotiations for an economic and technical aid agreement, including a Soviet grant of 30 million rubles, which was signed on April 24, 1959. In another document signed at the same time the Soviets agreed to assist in constructing a hospital at Katmandu and to provide medical personnel to operate it. It was also announced that the two governments had agreed to establish resident embassies at Moscow and at Katmandu (see ch. 6, Health and Welfare; and ch. 19, Industry and Trade).

Administration of the aid agreements was facilitated in October 1959 when the resident embassy opened at Katmandu. Diplomatic relations apparently have continued to be cordial and cooperative, marked by the exchange of state visits, the negotiation of new agreements and the renewal of old ones. Soviet President Voroshilov visited Katmandu from February 3 to 5, 1960. Also, at Katmandu, a 2-year cultural agreement was signed on May 17, 1961, and renewed early in 1964 in Moscow. On October 23, 1963, Tulsi Giri, then Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, made a state visit to Moscow at the invitation of the Soviet Government.

Pakistan

Relations with Pakistan have strengthened significantly since 1955, when Nepal—like India—was critical of Pakistan's arms pact with the United States and its participation in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, and particularly since August 1957, when Kunwar Indrajit Singh, then Nepal's Prime Minister, supported India in the Kashmir dispute. He reportedly stated that the Nepalese Government had proposed an agreement with Pakistan to evacuate Nepalese nationals from that country as soon as possible in return for reciprocal treatment of Pakistanis in Nepal. Information regarding the outcome is lacking.

At that time, official contact between the two countries apparently was through their respective representatives in New Delhi. The first high-level relationship began on September 10, 1961, when the King and Queen arrived in Karachi for a 6-day state visit. This was returned

May 9–12, 1963, by President Mohammed Ayub Khan, the first Pakistani head of government to visit Nepal. On this occasion the President conferred upon King Mahendra the honorary rank of Field Marshal in the Pakistan Army.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan High Commissioner to New Delhi was appointed to serve concurrently as Ambassador to Nepal. By September 1, 1963, a chargé d'affaires was resident in Katmandu, but he served under the Pakistan High Commissioner to New Delhi, who retained his title as Ambassador to Nepal.

The King's visit to Pakistan in the autumn of 1961 apparently eased the way for at least two agreements signed on October 19, 1962. Each agreement contained a clause calling for reciprocal most-favored-nation treatment. Another agreement, signed on January 29, 1963, provided Nepal with free trade transit facilities through the East Pakistan port of Chittagong. This arrangement somewhat reduces Nepal's dependence on India for import privileges, particularly since the establishment of an air link with East Pakistan later in the year. Possibly in reaction to this situation, India has liberalized the procedures governing Nepal's imports which pass through Indian territory, including the trade over ground routes between Pakistan and Nepal (see ch. 19, Industry and Trade).

Other Countries

Diplomatic relations have been established or are being arranged with a number of other foreign powers. Envoys were exchanged with France in 1949 when the French Ambassador in New Delhi was designated as Ambassador to Nepal and the Nepalese Ambassador in London was also accredited to France. In 1962, Nepal was represented in Paris by a resident "special attache." By early 1964 diplomatic relations had been arranged with six other European countries: Switzerland, Belgium, West Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia and Hungary. The acceptance of Nepalese students in Czechoslovakia and Poland attests to friendly contacts with these eastern European states.

Among the Middle East countries, Nepal has relations with Lebanon at the embassy level. Ties with Israel are friendly even without the formal exchange of envoys, as attested to by agreement on a program of mutual cooperation and assistance concluded in August 1960 at Tel Aviv by Bishweshar Prasad Koirala, then Prime Minister. The agreement provided for the dispatch of Israeli technicians to Nepal and the acceptance of Nepalese students in certain Israeli schools. These arrangements were reaffirmed in September 1963 during a state visit of the King and Queen to Israel.

In Asian countries, Nepal has an Ambassador in Rangoon (Burma) and a liaison officer in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), and the Ambassador to India was concurrently accredited to Ceylon in March 1964. Diplomatic relations with Japan have been through the Japanese Ambassador to New Delhi, who in September 1963 held talks with Nepalese officials regarding the possibilities of expanding Japan's economic assistance to Nepal. The two countries reportedly plan to exchange residential ambassadors sometime in 1964.

RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN EXPEDITIONS IN NEPAL

Relations with certain governments have been complicated at times by numerous foreign-sponsored mountaineering and scientific expeditions operating from bases in Nepal. For example, in 1954 the government granted permission for such enterprises sponsored by groups from Great Britain, the United States, Switzerland, New Zealand, Japan and Argentina. Since 1954 groups from India, France, the Netherlands and West Germany have been added to the list of expeditions that have at one time or another operated from Nepalese bases.

The Nepalese Government's attitude toward the expeditions has been generally friendly and cooperative. Because of the sensitive Tibetan border situation, however, they constitute a potential problem in foreign relations, as their activities in some instances have come under suspicion, not only by Communist China but by certain elements in Nepal and India, as a front for espionage functions. In order to counter these suspicions, the government in 1955 adopted a series of restrictive regulations, the principal provisions of which provided that: each expedition must be accompanied by a government-appointed Nepalese liaison officer who is to be paid, fed and equipped by expedition sources; each expedition must give a detailed account of the area and routes over which it intends to operate and then limit its activities strictly to the areas specified by the government; after completion of its work each expedition must submit a full report of its activities to the Nepalese Government; and the firearms allowed to the expedition must be used only for self-protection, as the shooting of wild animals in the mountains—particularly in Buddhist areas—is strictly forbidden. Furthermore, the government announced in February 1957 that the sponsors of mountaineering expeditions to Mount Everest or to the seven other highest peaks must pay a royalty of NR3,000 to the Nepalese Government. Royalties for expeditions to lower peaks varied from NR1,000 to NR2,000, depending on the height. Also, the families of Nepalese liaison officers or porters killed while in the expedition's service, must be paid death benefits amounting to NR3,000 and NR1,600, respectively.

The Chinese Communist press asserted in April 1960 that two Chinese and one Soviet climber had reached the summit of Mount Everest from the northern slope, which never before had been scaled by man. This caused lively political discussions in Nepal and the opposition party denounced the ascent as a "violation of Nepal's territorial integrity, as Nepal has always said the summit belongs to Nepal." The boundary treaty, signed on October 5, 1961, reportedly shows the demarcation line running across the summit, apparently to the satisfaction of both countries. Communist China does not insist on joint approval of any expedition on Mount Everest and seems to have conceded to Nepal its sovereign right to permit access to the summit. Thus, the issue apparently has been settled, temporarily at least.

The Nepalese Government has stated that permits will be granted to expeditions only after assurance that they are above suspicion and that their objectives coincide with their claims. Moreover, the government's policy is to prohibit expeditions from entering into critical border areas that might bring on disputes with Communist China.

MEMBERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Nepal initiated efforts to obtain admission to the United Nations in February 1949. The first application, made by the Rana government's Minister of Foreign Affairs in a letter to the Secretary General of the General Assembly, came up for consideration in the Security Council along with those of several other countries. It soon was a major issue of dispute between the Western powers and the Communist bloc. The Soviet Union contended that the United Nations should approve or disapprove the applications of all the countries, which included Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Outer Mongolia and Romania, in addition to Nepal. The United States argued that each country should be voted on separately. After repeated annual discussions a compromise was reached, and Nepal's application finally was approved on December 14, 1955.

Meanwhile Nepal had been admitted to a number of the specialized agencies which are under United Nations jurisdiction. Thus the country, before its actual admission to United Nations membership, was receiving a certain degree of economic assistance and technical advice from United Nations sources in its development projects. For example, Nepal was admitted to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in November 1951; to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in May 1952; to the World Health Organization (WHO) in May 1953; and to the Economic Council for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) in April 1954. In September 1961 it became a member of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Nepal is also a member of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and of the International Red Cross.

In accordance with the policy of extending its contacts with other countries, Nepal participated for the first time as a full member of the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee in March 1952. It also was a member of the Bandung conference of Asian-African countries in 1955, when its representatives reportedly sided with the neutralist Asian group consisting of India, Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia and Laos. King Mahendra attended the summit conference of nonaligned nations held September 1–6, 1961, at Belgrade.

CHAPTER 14

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Efforts of the government to maintain lines of communication with the people are hampered by the dispersion of the population in widely scattered, often isolated, communities and by the lack of interest among most rural inhabitants in happenings in Katmandu. The generally low level of education—fewer than 5 percent of the Nepalese were literate in 1960—is a further impediment. To reach the people the government has had to rely almost exclusively on radio and personal contact. Word-of-mouth communication is of paramount importance in all parts of the country except the Katmandu Valley where the educated elite is concentrated, and even there it is not unimportant.

Considerable progress has been made in the development of domestic news media, which were almost nonexistent before 1951. About a dozen small newspapers are published and circulated in the Katmandu Valley, and a radio broadcasting station which can be heard in most of the country has been established. A few books are published each year. Indian newspapers, radio and films, however, continue to attract a wider public in Nepal than do the country's own emerging news media.

The government makes extensive use of the leading newspaper and the radio station, both of which it owns, to mobilize popular support for direct rule by the King and to foster popular attitudes favorable to the success of the *panchayat* system, using the King as the central, unifying symbol. Government information specialists devote special attention to the younger generation from which the country's future leaders will come.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Mass communications media remained almost totally undeveloped before the overthrow of the Ranas in 1951. At that time the press consisted of a single newspaper, *Gorkhapatra,* which was circulated only in the Katmandu Valley, primarily among a small group of literate persons, and the *Nepal Gazette,* the official record of laws, regulations and decrees. Both were published by the government. The country had no radio broadcasting station; contact with administrative centers in outlying areas was maintained in the Tarai by wireless; in the mountains by courier.

The lack of public opinion media during this period reflected the apparent conviction of the ruling elite that it could most readily perpetuate its control by insulating Nepal from the outside world and by fostering existing internal social divisions. During slightly more than a century in power, the Ranas restricted travel into and out of the country, made no effort to develop popular education, and permitted the establishment of only those lines of communication which were absolutely essential to the functioning of the government in Katmandu and its administration in the interior.

In the atmosphere of reform which followed the popular revolt of 1951, there was an upsurge of journalistic activity and the new government took steps to strengthen its lines of communication with the people. A number of privately published daily and weekly newspapers, scholarly journals and popular magazines appeared. Many of these publications were filled with patriotic sentiments, praising the royal family and other leaders and expressing high hopes for the nation's future. A small political party press emerged, including *Nepal Pukar*, the Nepali Congress party newspaper, which had been founded by Nepalese exiles in India in the late 1940's, and the *Rashtrabani*, published by the Gorkha Parishad (Gurkha Party), an opposition group established in 1951 under Rana leadership in an effort to regain power. The government established a radio broadcasting station in the Katmandu Valley, operating with the transmitter originally used by the rebels in their action against the Rana forces. It also created the Department of Publicity and Broadcasting in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Press

By 1963 the country had about a dozen small daily newspapers, all published in Katmandu. Their combined circulation of some 12,000 copies was almost entirely confined to the Katmandu Valley. Circulation elsewhere was limited, not only by illiteracy, but by lack of transport facilities, a distrust of the written word, traditional among the rural people, and a general lack of interest in affairs in Katmandu, to which the press devoted the major share of news coverage.

Most of the newspapers were published in Nepali; one was in Newari, the indigenous language of the Valley; one was in Hindi; and two were in English (see table 5). In addition to the daily publications there was a total of about 40 newspapers and periodicals. The editors, writers and correspondents of these publications, almost all of whom are without formal journalistic training, tend to come mainly from the Newar and Pahari Brahman communities.

Although much changed from the time it served primarily as a vehicle for the glorification of the Rana family, *Gorkhapatra* continues to be published by the government and it occupies a commanding position in the Nepalese press. It is the most widely circulated newspaper (about 5,000 daily) and is sent to all government posts. Its news cov-

Table 5. *Daily Newspapers in Nepal*

Newspaper[1]	Language	Circulation in 1961	Political orientation
Commoner	English	1,500	Pro-Indian
Dainik Nepal (Nepal Daily)	Nepali	900	Pro-Indian
Gorkhapatra	Nepali	5,000	Published by the government
Halkhabar (News)	Nepali	800	Leftist. Anti-Indian, critical of administration
Janata (People)	Nepali	300	No fixed policy
Motherland	English	. . .	
Naya Samaj (New Society)[2]	Nepali	500	Generally supports administration. Anti-Indian
Nepal Basha Patrika (Nepal Language Paper)	Newari	700	Mildly critical of administration
Nepali	Hindi	500	Supports administration. Pro-Indian
Nepal Samachar (Nepal News)	Nepali	500	Supports administration. Independent. Foreign policy
Samaj (Society)	Nepali	500	Critical of administration. Pro-Communist China
Swatantra Samachar (Independent News)	Nepali	600	Generally critical of administration. Pro-Indian, Anti-Communist

[1] All are published in Katmandu.

[2] Banned in September 1963.

erage tends to deal mainly with official matters, coming primarily from the bulletin of the government-controlled news agency, which was established in 1962, and from reports supplied by the Department of Publicity and Information (in the Ministry of Panchayat Affairs) and by other ministries. It carries all government announcements, public service notices and news of government contracts. It is generally eight pages in length and, like other Nepalese newspapers, is printed on rough newsprint and uses few photographs, because of poor printing facilities and lack of technically trained personnel. Cartoons and sketches, common in the Western press, are absent.

Other than *Gorkhapatra*, newspapers of the decade after the Rana overthrow were nearly all published by politically motivated persons—generally with private financial backing—who sought to advance themselves by supporting an established or aspiring public figure. Personal bias ran through editorials, commentaries and news columns, and objective reporting was the exception rather than the rule. Editors were not always consistent in their loyalties, sometimes making rapid shifts of allegiance when it appeared expedient to do so. As a result a paper might carry a vigorous denunciation of a leading political personality which it had shortly before supported.

As the press acquired a degree of maturity, reporting became somewhat more objective. After the removal of the B. P. Koirala administration from power in 1960, King Mahendra required newspapers to obtain official clearance for all reports of political activity in Nepal. Later in 1962 it was ruled that the collection and distribution of news about and within the country was to be the exclusive right of a national news agency, Rashtriya Sambad Samiti (RSS).

The government monopoly on domestic news does not extend to treatment of international events and issues. The *Samiksha* (Analysis) is, for example, a Communist weekly, while *Swatantra Samachar* (Independent News) is pro-Indian and strongly anti-Communist.

Despite the gradual development of a domestic press since 1951, most Nepalese newspaper readers continue to rely on foreign publications, which have a far superior coverage of world news and are readily available in Katmandu bookshops and reading rooms. Many Indian morning newspapers are flown into the city by midday. An array of Hindi-language publications, some aimed primarily at Nepalese audiences, are read as well as several English-language newspapers, in particular the *Statesman,* from Calcutta, the *Times of India*, from Bombay, and the *Hindustan Times,* from Delhi. News, film and women's magazines in English are also popular, including the Pacific editions of *Time, Life* and *Newsweek*. *China Today,* a Chinese Communist magazine designed to have popular appeal, is published in India in Hindi, English and Nepali. The Chinese Communists also publish some material in Nepali in Nepal. Soviet as well as Chinese Communist literature in English and Nepali is given away or sold through booksellers and subscription agents. It ranges from general interest periodicals to scholarly journals.

Books

Book publishing is done on only a small scale. The Royal Nepal Academy, a government-sponsored society devoted to artistic and intellectual development and one of the few domestic publishers, has put out only about three dozen books. Most works by Nepali authors are printed in India, usually in Banaras, where costs are lowest.

Nepali-language books constitute the great part of the stock of local bookshops, but works in Hindi, Newari or English also appear on the shelves. Among the English-language imports generally available are paperback novels, mystery stories and a few hardback editions of fairly recent titles.

Radio and Television

Radio broadcasting is controlled exclusively by the government, the country's single broadcasting station, Radio Nepal, being under the direct supervision of the Department of Broadcasting in the Ministry of Panchayat Affairs. The station operates on mediumwave and shortwave. It has two transmitters, one of 5,000 watts—a gift of the Australian Government and installed in 1959—and another of 250 watts. With the installation of the 5,000-watt transmitter, the station's broadcasts could be heard over a wide range of territory in Nepal and in part of India.

The country's acute shortage of electric power is an operational handicap. It apparently did not, however, figure in the government's decision in late 1963 to abandon plans for an additional broadcasting station, which would have included television, since the Swiss firm which was to run it on a commercial basis was to have provided its own generator. Reportedly, the Nepalese Government and the Swiss firm were unable to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement.

The Department of Broadcasting is staffed by about 20 persons, mainly career civil servants. Although a few are trained specialists, most of the principal officers of the Department have made trips abroad to observe broadcasting facilities and techniques in the United States, the Soviet Union and other countries.

The number of radio receivers in proportion to the population is small but has been increasing rapidly, and servicemen on duty with British and Indian Gurkha units frequently bring back small transistor sets to their native villages. Because evasion of the law requiring registration of receivers in order to avoid paying the annual tax imposed on them is common, the precise number of families owning radios is not known. It is likely that the 16,000 receivers listed with the Katmandu magistrate as of early 1963 represented considerably fewer than the number actually in use. Moreover, the size of the listening audience greatly exceeds that suggested by this figure because listeners gather not only in private homes, but in tea houses and at public listening centers, of which there are more than 25 in all, located in the larger towns.

Films

Privately owned theaters are found in some of the larger towns including, in addition to Katmandu, Nepalganj in the Far Western Tarai and Biratnagar, Birganj, Janakpur and Dharan Bazar in the Eastern Tarai. Filmgoing is a popular form of recreation, and commercial showings are generally well attended.

Free outdoor film showings are offered by the government and foreign information services in outlying village areas. The popular response to such showings, at which many persons in the audience are seeing a film for the first time, is almost invariably enthusiastic. Private showings for members of the diplomatic corps and the Nepalese elite are also held occasionally at various embassies in Katmandu.

The Nepalese Government makes a few documentary films, but all other motion pictures are imported. India is the principal supplier, and popular Indian films, with dialogue in Hindi which is readily understood by filmgoing persons, often enjoy runs of 2 to 3 months. Films produced in Western countries are seen occasionally, but they are shown without subtitles and usually run for only 2 or 3 days. Films produced in the Soviet Union or in Communist China are also shown.

Word of Mouth

In a country whose population is largely illiterate and is to a great extent dispersed in isolated settlements scattered over rugged, mountainous terrain, word-of-mouth communication is of paramount importance in the dissemination of information. The circulation of newspapers, periodicals and other printed matter is confined almost entirely to the Katmandu Valley. Elsewhere, news is spread either by radio or by individuals moving from place to place.

Even though mass communications media are little developed, stories and reports travel far and fast. Information is passed on from one person to another, moving out in ever-widening circles from a central point of origin. Traders, holy men, beggars, porters and postmen figure importantly in this process, taking gossip from village to village throughout the countryside. So, too, do farmers and their wives, who go to centrally located bazaars to sell their produce. Even more important is the seasonal movement of considerable numbers of persons; for example, the thousands who make a yearly pilgrimage from the Tarai to Pashupatinath in Katmandu; the many secondary school and university students who leave their villages for educational centers each year; and the retired soldiers who annually report to distant camps to collect their pensions.

In all the larger towns there are public gathering places, such as wells and tea shops, where people exchange gossip, as they do in the evening in the houses of friends. Even in Katmandu, where daily newspapers are available and news of local interest can readily be heard on the radio, many congregate after government offices have closed for the day in a section of one of the main streets to greet friends and collect reports of the day's happenings from them.

Information spread by word of mouth is subject to individual interpretation and consequently may undergo considerable distortion or exaggeration in the process. It appears, however, that even the literate Nepalese villager tends to give more credence to information he has received by word of mouth than to that which has come to him in print. The word of village elders or government officials posted in the village is generally accepted as truth. This pattern of behavior appears to be true even in large towns with a heavy concentration of educated persons, who share a tendency to believe in reports originating from sources close to the palace or government officials, rather than in what is published.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

The responsibility for government information activities rests primarily with the Department of Publicity and Information in the Ministry of Panchayat Affairs, formerly the Department of Publicity and Broadcasting in the Ministry of Home Affairs. The Department's main functions are to publish and distribute informational materials on government policies and programs and to prepare photographs and films of public figures and ceremonies. Two other agencies of the Ministry of Panchayat Affairs, the Department of Broadcasting and the Department of Village Development also engage in information activities. In addition, other ministries conduct modest publicity programs in connection with their education, health or agricultural projects, using radio, posters, slides, fairs and exhibitions to convey their messages.

Information to Domestic Audiences

The domestic information activities of the government are considerably more extensive than those of the elected administration which was dismissed from office in December 1960. Heavy emphasis is given to the role of the King in national life. Speeches and public statements of the King are printed and sent to schools and administrative centers; photographs of him taken in connection with development projects are distributed; and both his domestic tours and foreign travels receive wide publicity. In the priority given to this theme, the apparently overriding aim has been to explain and solidify popular approval of the royal assumption of power.

Besides this primary objective, officials seem to regard two additional considerations as important in their information activities. One is to win support for the policies and programs of the government through explanation and persuasion. The other is to imbue the widely varied ethnic communities which make up the country's population with a feeling of loyalty to Nepal as a national entity. Government literature and radio broadcasts focus attention on such subjects as the *panchayat* system, the East-West Highway and Nepalese achievements in the arts, with the reigning monarch brought into the picture as a unifying symbol wherever appropriate.

In its relationship with the press the government has followed two approaches. It takes restrictive action by exercising strict censorship, and it takes positive action by providing subsidies and furnishing news and photographs through the RSS. Since early 1961, journals failing to cooperate with the government or indulging in severe criticism of its programs or its leaders have been subject to suspension. Official clearance has been required for the publication of political material. Bans have occurred with considerable regularity.

The RSS, in which the government owns the controlling share of stock, has a monopoly on the collection and distribution of news about and within Nepal. No other Nepalese individual or organization or foreign agency may engage in this activity. Foreign agencies, however, are permitted to collect and dispatch news bulletins out of the country. RSS has a tie-in with the French news agency Agence France Presse.

Radio Nepal is on the air at three intervals each day for a combined total of a few hours, most of which are devoted to light entertainment. This consists mainly of popular Indian music, although recently the station has been attempting to promote interest in Nepalese singers and folk songs by featuring them from time to time. In addition, there are daily newscasts in Nepali, Newari, Hindi and English which attract many more listeners than other programs. The remainder of the time is devoted to taped speeches by King Mahendra, commentaries on development achievements, and informational programs on such topics as health, agriculture and education, for which international agencies and foreign embassies supply some of the material. Like other government media the station makes extensive use of the theme of the throne as the focal point of national life, and brief excerpts of His Majesty's speeches are frequently heard in the intervals between scheduled programs.

Other information activities include the distribution of posters and newssheets to be pasted on the walls of public buildings; the publication of collections of King Mahendra's messages and addresses; the production and showing of newsreels and documentary films; and the maintenance of information centers in several of the larger towns. Presumably the government also makes use of opportunities available to it through its control of the educational system and its influence in the new social and professional organizations and to a lesser degree through the *panchayats* themselves. The Nepal Peasants' Organization, for example, has its own newspaper, *Karin*, which is devoted primarily to news and opinion originating at the village level.

Information to Audiences Abroad

Nepal engages in few information activities directed at foreign audiences. Other than the distribution of informational materials through its embassies abroad, its only project of any significance is a brief radio broadcast once each week addressed to Nepalese abroad. Following the royal assumption of power, denunciation of Indian policies and practices was fully widespread in the government-regulated press, but this diminished considerably after the autumn of 1962.

FOREIGN INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

Since the revolt of 1950–51, Nepal, situated between powerful neighbors to the north and south, has been subjected to increasing amounts of propaganda, in particular from Communist China—following the conclusion of a trade and friendship agreement with that country in 1956—and, more recently, from the Soviet bloc. By far the greatest amount of informational material, however, originates in India, a circumstance deriving from Nepal's geographical and historical relationship with that country. Most of the Indian newspapers, films and books circulating in Nepal are commercially produced and are not part of official Indian information efforts, but they have an important impact on Indo-Nepalese relations.

The Indian governmental effort centers on economic and technical assistance and cultural exchange. India maintains a series of cultural centers in Katmandu and other large towns, most of which include reading rooms stocked with Indian newspapers, magazines and books. Indian teams show documentary films from time to time around the country and arrange exhibitions of scholarly and literacy interest. As in the past, many Nepalese students are enrolled in Indian universities and secondary schools, and a number of Indian educators are now teaching at Tribhuvan University and other Nepalese schools. Broadcasts emanating from All-India Radio are probably the most widely heard of all foreign broadcasts reaching Nepal. The station broadcasts a half-hour program each morning to Nepal in Nepali.

The United States operates one of the principal foreign information programs in the country, its estimated expenditures doubling between 1961 and 1963. Directed primarily at the growing educated minority, its activities, conducted through the United States Information Service (USIS), include maintaining a circulating library of nearly 10,000 volumes and more than 100 periodicals; supplying news and features to the local press; furnishing news and special features to Radio Nepal; and arranging exhibits of cultural and scholarly interest. The agency also publishes an English-language periodical, the *Free World,* which contains pictures and text dealing mainly with developments in Asia. Film showing is also an important part of the program, as are such special activities as sponsoring tours of groups of American folk singers and other artists. English-language Voice of America broadcasts, which can be heard only on high-powered shortwave sets, reportedly have attracted little interest among listeners.

Communist China, stressing the themes of friendship and peaceful intentions toward Nepal and seeking to engender Nepalese fear of India as a menace to its independence, depends primarily on the exchange of cultural missions, invitations to delegations to visit Peiping and the indirect impact of technical and economic assistance to carry its propaganda messages. This effort is supplemented by radio broadcasting, film showings, exhibits and the dissemination of books and other printed materials in Nepali and English. The Nepal-China Friendship Association is also active. Visits of heads of states have been exchanged between the two countries. Premier Chou En-lai visited Nepal in 1957 and in 1960, and in 1961 King Mahendra visited Peiping.

Radio Peking makes general use of anti-Western and anti-Indian themes, its attacks on India having become increasingly virulent in 1962. Broadcasts continued to accuse the West of warmongering and economic exploitation of undeveloped countries. Strong objection was taken to United States military aid to India, and the United States Peace Corps was labeled subversive.

A step-up in the flow of materials emanating from Soviet-bloc countries in 1960 was followed in 1961 by the signing of a cultural exchange agreement with the Soviet Union. Since then, relatively frequent visits of artists, educators and newspapermen to the Soviet Union have taken place, later reciprocated by visits of Soviet cultural delegations to Nepal. Radio Moscow and Radio Nepal exchanged taped recordings of cultural programs and recorded music. A Soviet film exhibition was held in Nepalese theaters in early 1963, and the centenary of a famed Soviet artist was made the occasion for elaborate ceremonies by the

Nepal-Soviet Friendship Association. Between 1956 and 1962 more than 150 Nepalese students were trained in Soviet-bloc countries. The Soviet Union maintains a library in Katmandu, which is about the same size as that of the USIS and is well patronized, and the Soviet Embassy publishes and distributes a daily newspaper in Nepali.

Communist literature distributed in Nepal in 1962 included nearly 70,000 brochures and leaflets in Hindi and 367,000 copies of 32 Soviet books translated into Hindi. Although printed materials were the principal propaganda medium, Soviet-bloc radio broadcasts to the area increased by 21 hours a week in 1962. At the close of 1962 the Soviet Union and Communist China combined were broadcasting a total of 61¼ hours in English and 33¼ hours in Hindi to Southeast Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Radio Australia and Radio Ceylon can be heard in Nepal and, although their programs are not beamed directly at the country, many Nepalese listen to them. The British library is welcomed by the reading public in Katmandu. Pakistan opened an information center in early 1963 and the Japanese have sponsored a number of film showings.

CHAPTER 15

ATTITUDES AND REACTIONS

Most of the people of Nepal have only a very limited political consciousness. Because of the multiple fragmentations of the country which insulate its many diverse components from one another and from other nations, the people are largely uninterested in and unaware of anything beyond the limits of their villages or districts. They are ignorant of and indifferent to politics. There are few events, personalities or issues which have penetrated this strong parochialism sufficiently to generate attitudes which focus on the same concepts in all parts of the country. This pattern is so widespread that it outweighs the importance of any other politically relevant attitude.

In this situation the Katmandu Valley stands in sharp contrast. It is the only area of real political awareness in the whole country, and it has thereby acquired an influence in government and politics far out of proportion to its size and population. The nation's politics are dominated by the narrowly based and fluctuating opinions of the Valley, and the few attitudes prevalent in the rest of the country simply provide the background.

In addition to the differences in political consciousness between the Katmandu Valley and the rest of the country, the cultural diversity of the population creates significant differences in the perceptions which various regional and ethnic groups have of the same idea. The degree to which several groups may be aware of the monarchy, for instance, may be the same, but they each may have a different conception of its meaning. Information on such variations is not available except in a very few instances, and, consequently, it is the characteristics of the differences in attitudes rather than their substantive content which assume greater importance.

Even in areas where the general level of political awareness is low, there will be categories of individuals whose education, experience, official position, or social or economic status distinguish them and make them agents for broadening the fund of common attitudes. Schoolteachers, development workers, certain other officials of the central government and Gurkhas returned from abroad will be found in almost every village and act as opinion leaders and channels for information from the outside. Foreigners entering the country to aid in economic development have had a similar effect.

Moreover, there are a number of factors which are in operation to change prevailing attitudes or generate new ones. The monarchy is the one political concept most widely shared by the people, and King Mahendra is making vigorous efforts to broaden and strengthen its popular support. One of the primary means by which this is being done is through the *panchayat* system which, as the first uniform system of local government to operate on a national scale, may be expected to have an important influence on attitudes toward the government if it remains in operation for a sufficient length of time. The same is true of the class and professional organizations.

THE MONARCHY

The monarchy is the most widely known and highly esteemed political institution in the country, and the idea of monarchy has always held a dominant place in the population's limited cluster of political attitudes. Nevertheless, at the most only a vague perception of it exists. The concept first took root among the people of the area now known as Nepal more than a millennium before a political entity bearing that name came into being in its modern form in the late eighteenth century. It retained its vitality despite the occurrence of periods when a monarchical type of government did not operate. Even the century-long domination of the monarchy by the Ranas failed to displace it from its central position in popular sentiment, and a resurgence of mass support for the king was a major factor in the overthrow of the Ranas in 1951. The present royal line, the Shah dynasty, was first enthroned in the Kingdom of Gorkha in the middle of the sixteenth century, and the present king is thus heir to a dynastic tradition of more than four centuries, as well as a monarchical tradition more than three times as old.

The stature of the king is heightened by the fact that he is regarded by many of the people as an incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. A majority of the population is Hindu, and by the Constitution of 1962 Nepal was officially proclaimed a Hindu state. As a result of centuries of intermingling of Buddhism and Hinduism, many of the Buddhist minority also worship gods of the Hindu pantheon; at least some would also probably acknowledge the divinity of the king to some extent. It would appear that in some areas of the country there is even a greater awareness of the religious significance of the king than of his political role.

To the great mass of the people the king is a transcendent figure in distant Katmandu, and he is not directly connected in their minds with the manifestations of the state's authority which they experience at the hands of local officials. The uncritical acceptance with which they regard him is not tempered by any political awareness which might give rise to qualification or modification of their basic commitment to the monarchy. It is this general respect for the monarchy among the people which provides a strong foundation for royal power and allows a wide freedom of action in its exercise. In recent years King Mahendra appears to have had some degree of success in augmenting the scope and intensity of this feeling—through the *panchayat* system, by occasional royal tours in the hinterland, and by emphasis in communications media on the values of the monarchy. By taking an active role in politics the King runs the risk that such attempts to reinforce these links between the people and the throne may ultimately work to his disadvantage. There is little evidence of any such development among the rural people, who look to the monarchy as a benevolent influence and identify it with the protection and advancement of their basic interests.

The attitude of urban and educated groups toward the monarchy, unlike that of the peasantry, has undergone a marked but not fundamental alteration as the result of King Mahendra's vigorous efforts to extend the influence of the crown. Increasingly, disappointed by his reluctance to reestablish a representative form of government, many in this category have come to view the monarchy with a pronounced detachment and skepticism. Although no criticism of the King is publicly voiced and is impossible in the present circumstances, government ministers have been the proxy targets for what have obviously been indirect attacks on the King and his policies by these groups. They have sought to limit its power, however, rather than to abolish it altogether.

The only group on record in favor of eliminating the monarchy is the radical faction of the Communist Party. The extent to which this policy is shared by the Party rank and file or by other elements of the society which may tend toward radical action is impossible to determine. The Nepali Congress party is widely believed to desire the abolition of the monarchy, but it has not formally made such a measure part of its program. With these possible exceptions, however, the vast mass of the people, even those disenchanted with the status quo, would probably oppose the total abolition of the monarchy and would tolerate nothing more than the containment of its power within constitutional limits.

THE NATION

Any sense of nationhood which exists among the people is very weak. They have little feeling of being bound together in loyalty and affection for the same political unit. History provides the basic symbols for a national feeling, but the people of the country do not yet share a common set of meanings for those symbols. They have no feeling of participating in the creation of a common future. The faint amount of national awareness which does exist between the disparate elements of the society is based primarily on the links between the people and the monarchy; religious affinities and a linguistic bond have provided secondary connections.

Four categories of attitudes toward the nation can be distinguished according to the degree of intensity with which its existence is felt. Some people are totally unaware that there is any such thing as the nation of Nepal. Many others are vaguely conscious that there is something called Nepal, but to them the term refers to the Katmandu Valley rather than the larger political entity. They do not feel connected or identified with it in any way, and the idea of nationhood is an abstraction which they do not comprehend and to which they are indifferent. Still others have a greater awareness of the nation, but only because of their resistance to its claims on their loyalty. They usually possess a highly developed sense of identity with some tribal or ethnic group and regard the nation as a foreign threat to their traditional autonomy Finally, there are those few—for the most part well-educated and living in urban areas—who have not only a definite feeling of being part of a national community but who also have provided a seedbed for the growth of Nepalese nationalism.

Nationalist sentiment, as distinct from simply an awareness of the nation, exists almost exclusively in the Katmandu Valley and perhaps a few of the larger towns. It is mainly a negative reflex and contains few elements of positive national feeling. Its major source and most frequent form of expression is antagonism toward India. India's deep involvement in almost every significant aspect of Nepalese life, though not without its recognized benefits, has created a profound mistrust and resentment of virtually every action bearing on Nepal that it takes. Anti-Indian attitudes, sometimes encouraged by political leaders, have occasionally erupted in spasms of nationalist feeling. These hostile outbursts generally occur when the realities of Indo-Nepalese relations come into conflict with Nepal's newly acquired and jealously held ideas of independence and sovereignty. Opportunities for friction are numerous and are likely to persist for some time.

The growth of national consciousness is impeded by a number of factors. The country's mountainous terrain divides it into innumerable isolated localities, and its rudimentary transportation and communications facilities provide very weak connections between them. The tenuousness of these ligaments of national unity is accentuated by the diversity, complexity and insularity of the many groups composing the population. Moreover, deficiencies in the system of territorial administration have rendered the central government incapable of welding a more unified nation, and the lack of universal public education until recently has deprived the country of an important stimulus to national consciousness.

In the absence of effective overriding ties with the nation, the parochial loyalties of region, ethnic group, clan, caste and village predominate. Sectional feeling prevails in various parts of the country, and there is separatist sentiment in the Tarai and among the Kiranti in the eastern hills. Regional feeling is also pronounced in the northern border area. All areas manifest a generalized animosity toward the Katmandu Valley, whose inhabitants, especially the Newar, have what is regarded as a disproportionately large voice in the operations of the government. This attitude is reciprocated by the people of the Valley, who view those beyond it as crude and ignorant.

Such attitudes are intensified by the influence of adjacent nations. Although not encouraged by the Indian Government, separatism in the Tarai is inevitably stimulated by that region's close interaction with the Indo-Gangetic Plain, of which it is a geographical and cultural extension. In the north the connections which Tibeto-Nepalese groups maintain with Tibet constitute an external orientation which militates against their integration within the Nepalese polity. The increasing sensitivity of the Sino-Nepalese border in recent years has created concern that this situation will complicate the central government's task of winning the full allegiance of the people of this area.

In addition to the regional divisions in the nation there are others created by the existence of many tribal and ethnic groups. The fissures between them are widened by the disdain with which they regard one another. Each views the others through a set of unfavorable stereotypes tinctured with suspicion, contempt and hostility.

THE GOVERNMENT

Attitudes toward the government follow very closely those toward the king and the nation in many respects. Most people have no conception of the central government other than what is conveyed to them about it through the person of the king. Even this diminishes rapidly the greater the distance from Katmandu or other urban areas. In remote parts of the country and those possessing a tradition of special status the central authority emanating from the capital is regarded as slightly alien and is tolerated with some reluctance.

The image which most people have of the ideal government is one in which it is a benevolent and paternal dispenser of favors, and it is primarily against this standard that the effectiveness of the government is judged. For most of the people the resulting attitudes toward the government are limited in range to those they have acquired through contact with local officials and field representatives of the central government, whose connection with higher levels does not seem to be recognized. The public servants who are likely to be most familiar to the people are the headmen (who may also be tax collectors), the development workers, the schoolteachers, the police, the judiciary and, to a lesser extent, the Army and the customs officials. The authority of these officials is nominally accepted, but it is apt to be regarded as something to be avoided whenever possible. This is the result of a long history of both authoritarian rule and local autonomy, but a different response to the government may be developing in the wake of its growing benevolence and the institution of the *panchayat* system. Personnel representing the new orientation of government—teachers, development workers, and medical technicians—are generally more warmly regarded than those engaged in the more long-standing functions of the administration—tax collectors, police and judiciary—which have never been particularly popular roles.

FOREIGN NATIONS

The images of foreign nations for most of the people are determined primarily by the nature and extent of their relations with foreigners who have entered the country in increasing numbers during the last decade and whose individual qualities are taken as reflecting those of the nations they represent. Villagers generally seem to be well disposed toward foreigners. Fear of reprisal for disregarding the Rana policy of avoiding foreign contacts once made the people circumspect with strangers, but reports of recent Western observers indicate that this is no longer the case. Apparently, little remains of this tendency but an aloofness in certain areas. The far more usual response to foreigners seems to be a quick interest and friendliness and, within the limits imposed by the ritual requirements of caste and religion, acceptance.

India

Anti-Indian feeling to one degree or another is present in all groups throughout the country and cuts across the main lines of internal division—caste, tribe, region, educational levels, political sympathy and economic status. The Indian role in all important facets of Nepalese life is so large and obtrusive that it multiplies the sources of friction between the two countries.

The Nepalese are highly sensitive to even the appearance of Indian influence in their political and governmental affairs. During the early post-Rana years India was so deeply involved in Nepalese politics that Indian officials attended Cabinet meetings, and the Indian prime minister mediated major disputes within the government. Such intervention no longer takes place, but India's strong and enduring interest in Nepalese affairs, sharpened by the crisis in its relations with China, promises to perpetuate a major cause of friction. Moreover, many Nepalese seem to feel that India is casual and arrogant in dealing with Nepal and does not attach sufficient importance to its desire to be treated as a sovereign and independent state.

The Nepalese also resent their economic dependence on India, the primary source of trade and investment and the largest contributor to economic development programs. Some even feel that India's sole economic aim in Nepal is the selfish exploitation of its resources. There is also antagonism over the widespread circulation of Indian films and publications, which many denounce as a manifestation of "cultural imperialism." A related reaction comes from non-Hindu or only superficially Hindu groups who rebel against the extensive Brahmanization of Nepalese life which has resulted from the operation of Indian influence over a long period of time.

Antipathy toward India on the grounds of its political, economic and cultural impact on Nepal is most prevalent among the educated and politically conscious and active groups in urban areas. People generally, however, seem to feel that they are patronized by the Indians who come to Nepal and that they are looked upon by them as backward inhabitants of some minor province of India. Other common complaints are that Nepalese are cheated by Indian traders and ill-used by Indian employers.

This anti-Indian feeling conflicts with the belief of a fairly large body of informed people that the best interests of Nepal depend on the maintenance of good relations with India. Castigation of the opposition or the government as pro-Indian is a basic political tactic, and the emotions aroused in this way have often made it extremely difficult for a political figure or government official to publicly advocate a pro-Indian policy. Therefore, any Nepalese government whose orientation is toward India usually encounters a strong undercurrent of feeling against its policy and finds it necessary to cater to popular feeling by verbal and symbolic actions which are somewhat contradictory to the actual course of such a policy. The considerations which argue for the maintenance of friendly relations with India are sufficiently compelling that even a politician who shares and exploits anti-Indian sentiment while in opposition will, once in power, find himself forced to adopt a softer tone.

China

The feeling against India has sometimes worked to the advantage of Communist China. Although Nepal's foreign policy moves in the early 1960's brought it into much closer relations with the Peiping regime, this did not reflect pro-Chinese or pro-Communist feeling in anything other than a very superficial sense. The shift in Nepal's policy was largely a reaction against India and can hardly be taken as indicative of the basic attitude toward the Chinese. Most of the people, even the relatively well informed, are largely ignorant of China and the nature of the Communist regime. There is only a limited knowledge of China among the remainder, and they are inclined to be much less skeptical and critical of it than they are of India. To some degree they tend to identify with it as a fellow Asian country and look to it as a means of countering what they regard as the excessive influence of India. They are inclined to overlook or minimize the possible danger from Communist China. Although aware of the delicacy of their position between the two major powers of Asia, the Nepalese appear to have no particular fear of China despite the fact that Tibetan refugees entering the country have provided some of the people—mainly Bhote groups along the northern frontier—with firsthand information on the brutality of the Communists in Tibet.

In general, Nepalese know more about Tibet than about China proper. Trades and various Bhote groups traditionally have maintained connections across the Tibetan border. The Hindu majority, however, tends to view the Tibetans in much the same way as they do the Bhote—as ignorant and primitive tribesmen.

United States

There are only a few, loosely held and ambiguous ideas about the United States. Because of its distance from Nepal, the people who are at all aware of its existence are inclined to regard it as a relatively disinterested power in the context of Himalayan politics. It is viewed as a rich and benevolent nation to which Nepal can turn to provide a makeweight in its dealings with India and China. The Nepalese are vaguely uneasy over the seeming lack of political motives for the extent of United States involvement in Nepal, and a few tend to explain this by the theory that it is acting as an agent of Indian interests. Most people, however, seem to believe that the containment of communism is the principal American objective in Asia and feel that it provides the primary incentive for its concern with Nepal.

A fairly large number of Nepalese have had some form of contact with Americans, mainly with tourists or those composing the official mission. The general stereotype which has arisen from this acquaintance depicts them as good-hearted, generous and friendly but basically simple people of somewhat limited perception. Accompanying this has been a disposition to accept unflattering judgments of the United States and a reluctance to believe anything which conflicts with their uncomplimentary but amiable opinion of Americans. According to all reports, volunteers of the United States Peace Corps have already had a measurable effect in improving the image of the United States.

Great Britain

Since its withdrawal from India in 1947, Great Britain's connections with Nepal have consisted of its recruitment of Gurkha troops and the provision of a limited amount of economic aid. The Nepalese retain a highly favorable impression of Great Britain from an earlier day, however, and feel that it is a power to whom they will always be able to turn for help in any critical situation. Awareness of and admiration for Great Britain are sustained by Gurkha veterans who have returned from service with the British Army and have become important figures and leaders of opinion in their villages because of status acquired through such service. Pensions to these men and remittances from those abroad are an important factor in the economy and enhance the favorable image of Great Britain. Apparently no stigma is attached to Great Britain in the public mind for the part it played in perpetuating the Rana regime, or for its role as a major colonial power. The Nepalese word for Englishman—*angrezi*—is commonly applied to all Westerners.

The Soviet Union

There is little information on Nepalese attitudes toward the Soviet Union. The prevalent stereotype is a favorable one, and, as in the case of Communist China, an uncritically generous interpretation is apt to be made of Soviet actions. There appears to be little knowledge of or concern over the Soviet Union's role as the leader of the Communist world and its activities.

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SECTION III. ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 16

CHARACTER AND STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY

Consisting for the most part of rugged mountains, where land use is limited by high altitudes, steep slopes and deep gorges, Nepal has a poor agricultural economy in an embryonic state of development. It has an enormous and almost untouched hydroelectric power potential and large timber resources. There is as yet, however, little indication of any other substantial natural wealth. The undeveloped state of the economy can only in part be attributed to topography and lack of resources. A major contributing factor has been its years of isolation, particularly within the 100 years prior to 1951, from the massive social and economic changes which were taking place in the outside world and were reflected in the Indian subcontinent (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

Landlocked and lacking essential requirements, such as salt, it is heavily dependent on its neighbors, especially India. Industry is negligible and transportation rudimentary. Agriculture generally is characterized by small holdings, production for family use and traditional service relationships. The most profitable export is manpower—mainly the famous modern mercenary, the Gurkha soldier. Most of the 9.7 million people live at a bare subsistence level, and even those who are not primarily farmers or herdsmen produce most of the food they consume. Although money has long been in use, cash income is only a supplement to all but a small number of wealthy landowners, moneylenders and merchants.

In the 12 years since the overthrow of the Rana regime, some small changes have occurred in the structure of the economy, but most have been peripheral to its agricultural base. The end of Rana-enforced seclusion widened the opportunities for trade, which Nepalese throughout the country were quick to seize. The opening of the first motorable road between India and the interior, in this instance, Katmandu Valley, and the development of air transport further accelerated the tempo of commercial activity. Industry has shown no such expansion, since the people have demonstrated little disposition to invest in such undertakings and have had little experience in business except as traders. The Five-Year Plan (1956–61) and the Three-Year Plan (1962–65) have accomplished far less than was hoped but have resulted in some gains. The Plans have, however, provided the government with experience in the basic requirements of efficient planning. The failure to reach Plan goals has pointed up the need to develop the government's fiscal system, to reform the tax structure and to stimulate the participation of the entire public in the development program.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Until 1951, Nepal was a closed state, and the Rana policy of seclusion was strictly enforced by the British while they ruled India. Behind the barrier of the Mahabharat Lekh range, the country was in effect a medieval fiefdom held in the service of the Ranas. In addition to the land revenues which were the prerogative of the ruling Ranas, members of the family held monopolies of customs collection and trade and mining concessions. For almost a hundred years the Ranas poured this income into ostentatious luxury or hoarded it in gold and jewels or, in the twentieth century, in foreign investments.

More enlightened policies came in the 1920's under the incumbent Rana, Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher, who abolished slavery and opened the door to technological advance. His policies were continued by his brother, Juddha Shamsher, who succeeded him as prime minister. He established the country's first commercial bank, invested in industry himself, and encouraged his relatives to follow his example. He built roads in the Katmandu Valley and one from Birganj on the Indian border to Bhimphedi at the foot of the hills. He purchased the ropeway used by the British in the Third Afghan War (1919) and installed it to lift goods over the hills from Dharsing to Katmandu Valley. Notwithstanding these expenditures for public purposes, it is estimated that the Rana family fortunes continued to increase by the equivalent of $60 million yearly. With the end of Rana control in 1951, the great Rana palaces and Chandra Shamsher's improvements were the only remaining material legacy to the nation of the accumulated wealth of a century.

However, there were ameliorating factors. For over a hundred years, thousands of peasants from among the Magar, Rai and Limbu, located in the hills to the east and west of Katmandu Valley, had been in regular, well-paid employment in the British Indian Army. As a result, the equivalent of some $1.3 million annually found its way back into the hills in the form of individual savings and pensions which the Ranas could not touch. In addition, Rana administration was not uniform throughout the country. Certain groups, the Sherpa, for instance, were left to manage their affairs in customary ways so long as they paid a yearly sum to the Maharaja (the ruling Rana). Other enclaves were semiautonomous vassal states whose petty rajas either paid an annual assessment or in some cases received an annual subsidy from the Maharaja for performance of a service to the state, such as guarding a pass. Even where the district governor (*bada hakim*) of the Maharaja administered the district, it is likely that to the people the hand of the local landlord and moneylender appeared to weigh far more heavily than that of the Rana in Katmandu.

Migration also acted as a check valve for economic pressure, it being common for one or more sons in peasant families to go to India in search of employment or business opportunity or to seek land elsewhere in Nepal. Many who left the country returned with their savings, but others settled permanently in India or as far away as Burma. It has been estimated by a Nepalese economist that for decades a third of Nepal's young men have been leaving the country each year to seek opportunity elsewhere.

In 1951 demands for social reform and development of the economy came not from the peasantry but from the articulate portion of the public in the urban center of Katmandu and from the politicians. They flooded the new government with suggestions and recommendations for adoption of the latest ideas from abroad, and offers of grants, loans and technical assistance were received from the United Nations, India, Switzerland, the United States, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and many other nations and organizations.

The government found itself faced with a dearth of basic information on the country and a serious shortage of trained personnel, which made the solution of economic problems almost impossible. There had been no geographical or geological survey, no collection of meteorological or hydrological data and no population census. A committee set up in 1951 to take steps to abolish tax-free (*birta*) land tenure and the Land Reforms Committee set up in 1952 made no progress because among other things land records were lacking. Under the Ranas there had been no government budget and there were no suitable records of government revenues and expenditures. The first task of the foreign experts was to establish the means for essential data collection, but a further obstruction appeared in the lack of Nepalese with the necessary technical training.

Popular discontent mounted as a series of party governments failed to solve the country's economic problems. Tenants were being terrorized by powerful landlords who were engaging in extortion, mass evictions and exaction of forced labor. Then in December 1955 the King assumed personal direction of the affairs of state. Determined to accelerate the pace of social reform and economic development despite the lack of basic data and trained technicians, he promulgated the Land Reforms Act, which abolished forced labor, limited the exactions of landlords and provided for security of tenure. Other measures included: establishment of a central bank to increase the circulation of Nepalese currency and to control foreign exchange; nationalization of the forests and provision of measures for forest protection; promulgation of the Nepal Mines Act, whereby concessions would be granted by the government for the exploitation of mineral resources; and formation of development boards for the implementation of development projects.

In 1956 the King announced the Five-Year Plan, to expire in 1961.

Described as "a flexible but definite program for setting the wheels of progress in motion," it was essentially a collection of government projects unavoidably based on rough calculations. In order to build the "democratic welfare state" envisaged by the King and in the interest of more effective administration, the country was divided into 14 zones and 75 development blocks. In the Tarai, each block contained roughly a population of 65,000 and an area of 300 square miles; in the hills, each contained a population of 45,000 and an area of 200 square miles. An integral part of the program was the Village Development Scheme, which was given highest priority in the Five-Year Plan (see ch. 17, Agriculture).

Notwithstanding the King's efforts, little was accomplished in the next 5 years, during which party government was revived. The Birta Abolition Act, which had been discussed since 1951, was passed by Parliament in 1959, but this Act, like similar measures in previous years, remained largely a dead letter in the absence of administrative machinery to enforce it. A number of foreign aid projects had gotten underway but were forced to proceed with little contribution from the government as a result of the bureaucracy's inability to act. Communications within ministries and policy coordination between ministries remained poor or nonexistent, and in the districts the force of central government directives tended to fade with distance from the capital.

In December 1960 the King, stating that he was disgusted with the government's paralysis and the manipulations of the politicians, imprisoned the members of the Cabinet, dissolved Parliament and once again took over direct rule. He promulgated a number of laws widening the tax base, increasing taxes and strengthening the monetary system. He established the National Planning Council to assess and report on accomplishments under the Five-Year Plan and to prepare the Three-Year Plan. His most important innovation was the system of a "four tier" *panchayat* democracy designed to enlist wide public participation in the development of the country.

The *panchayat* system, conceived as a nationwide organization which included all adult citizens, was to be based on the directly elected village *panchayat* (council) and extended through the indirectly elected district and the zonal *panchayat* to culminate in the National Panchayat. Its stated economic aim was the replacement of the feudal system by a self-sustaining developed economy. The village *panchayat* was directed to study the needs of the village and ways and means for promoting economic and social development, and the village and the district *panchayat* were both given a wide but undefined power to deal with affairs of administration and development. The zonal *panchayats* appear to have been assigned no economic function.

Elections, begun in 1961, to village, district and zonal *panchayats* and to the National Panchayat were completed by the spring of 1963, and the National Panchayat was inaugurated by the King on April 14, 1963. In an early session it revalidated the economic and social reform laws promulgated by the King and by the defunct Parliament. Over the summer and into the fall, members of the government held seminars with *panchayat* members at all levels of the system, instructing them in the application of the new social and economic legal codes and the duties of the *panchayats* in promoting the development of the country.

Between 1951 and the end of 1962, eight countries and various organizations had contributed the equivalent of $82.5 million to the development of the country, mostly in grants. Airports, roads, power plants, schools, hospitals and training centers had been built. The United States had financed the reclamation of the Rapti Valley in the Tarai to provide new land for Nepal's landless. India was building a number of multipurpose dams which would provide power and extend the area of irrigated land. Experts had been provided to carry out surveys and to advise on all aspects of the economy, on economic planning and on finance and government administration. Some 4,000 Nepalese had been sent abroad for technical, vocational and professional training and several hundred had been trained in Nepal in institutions established by the various foreign aid missions (see fig. 12 and table 6).

THE ECONOMY—1963

The national income of Nepal has been roughly estimated at about the equivalent of $400 million. As the occupational section of the 1961 Census of Population has not been tabulated, the census of 1952–54 remains the sole indicator of the probable degree to which each sector of the economy contributes to the total.

On the basis of the 1952–54 figures and the absence of major changes in the economy, it is probable that in 1963 over 93 percent of the population earn a living from the land—from farming, forestry and animal husbandry. Their production contributes the largest share to the national income and provides the country's major exports. The actual value of this contribution, however, cannot be assessed, for most production is for family consumption and much of the surplus leaves the country through private channels. Owing to soil erosion, to the lack of irrigation facilities, fertilizers and pest controls, as well as the inequitable land tenure system and the peasant's unfamiliarity with modern farming methods, productivity is low and agriculture's contribution is much less than its potential. A few of those who earn a living from the land are well-to-do landlords whose ownership derives from a privileged position in the past. Most are tenants or owners of small plots, and many of the latter between seasons engage in nonagricultural pursuits, such as trading, construction, porterage, pottery and basket making and other handicrafts.

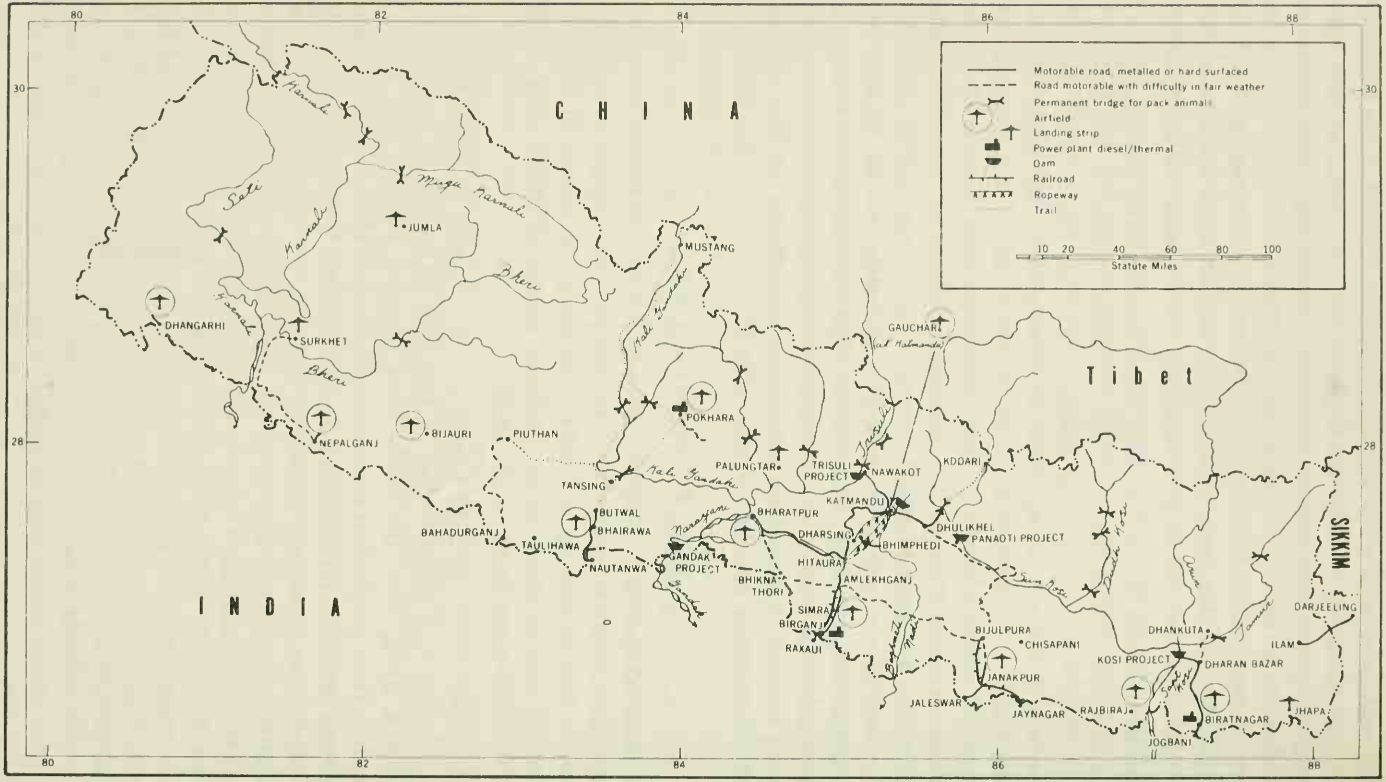

Motorable road, metalled or hard surfaced
Road motorable with difficulty in fair weather
Permanent bridge for pack animals
Airfield
Landing strip
Power plant diesel/thermal
Dam
Railroad
Ropeway
Trail
10 20 40 60 80 100
Statute Miles
CHINA
Tibet
INDIA
SIKKIM
80
82
84
86
88
30
28
Karnali
Seti
Mugu Karnali
Bheri
JUMLA
DHANGARHI
SURKHET
NEPALGANJ
BIJAURI
PIUTHAN
MUSTANG
Kali Gandaki
POKHARA
PALUNGTAR
TRISULI PROJECT
NAWAKOT
GAUCHAR (at Katmandu)
Trisuli
KODARI
TANSING
BUTWAL
BHAIRAWA
BAHADURGANJ
TAULIHAWA
NAUTANWA
Narayani
GANDAK PROJECT
Gandak
BHARATPUR
DHARSING
HITAURA
BHIKNA THORI
KATMANDU
BHIMPHEDI
AMLEKHGANJ
SIMRA
BIRGANJ
RAXAUI
DHULIKHEL
PANAOTI PROJECT
Sun Kosi
Dudh Kosi
Arun
Tamur
Bagmati Nadi
BIJULPURA
CHISAPANI
JANAKPUR
JALESWAR
JAYNAGAR
RAJBIRAJ
DHANKUTA
KOSI PROJECT
DHARAN BAZAR
Sapt Kosi
BIRATNAGAR
JOGBANI
ILAM
DARJEELING
JHAPA

Figure 12. Power Developments and Transportation Facilities, Nepal, January 1963

Table 6. *Foreign Aid Projects Completed in Nepal to 1963*

Donor	Projects
UNITED STATES	
	Agriculture
	Conducted marketing surveys in Dharan, Dhankuta, Bhojpur; and orange marketing survey in Dharan Bazar and a jute marketing survey in Morang, Jhapa and Saptari.
	Established a workshop for the maintenance and repair of farm implements.
	Carried out Rapti Valley development scheme. Established farms at Singha Durbar (Katmandu), Parwanipur, Rapti, Biratnagar, Bhairawa and Dhankuta, where crop experiments are conducted.
	Established 7 zonal and district agricultural extension offices.
	Established vegetable and fruit farms at Balaju, Kakana, Godavari and Singha Durbar (Katmandu); research stations at Kirtipur, Dhankuta and Pokhara; orchard nurseries at Rapti, Parwanipur, Godavari, Biratnagar and Singha Durbar (Katmandu); and a trial orchard at Dhunbesi.
	Imported Sindhi cattle for livestock improvement. Established a pig farm at Jiri and one at Singha Durbar (Katmandu); cattle farms at Rapti and Singha Durbar (Katmandu); a buffalo farm at Jiri; and a sheep farm in Chitland.
	Established Parwanipur Central Hatchery for hatching chicks; and fish hatcheries at Godavari, Pokhara and Parwanipur.
	Established a School of Agriculture at Katmandu.
	Established a soils laboratory ay Katmandu and financed soil analysis.
	Financed construction of grain warehouses at Hitaura, Amlekhganj, Bharatpur and Biratnagar.
	Financed the demarcation of forest boundaries (a total of 408 miles completed) and the construction of 78 miles of fire protection lines. Established a tree nursery and financed the planting of 774 acres with new trees. Financed the construction of buildings for forest guards and foresters.
	Established the Mahendra National Park at Chitawan as a wild animal protection center.
	Established the Godavari Botanical Garden for the study of medicinal plants.
	Surveyed medicinal and other useful plants found in Nepal: Gosakunda and Kalinchawk areas in Baghmati and Sagarmatha, Chisapani, Rapti and Bardia.
	Established 4 herb farms at Shivapuri, Manichur, Daman and Dharan for experimental work.

Table 6. Foreign Aid Projects Completed in Nepal to 1963—Continued

Donor	Projects
UNITED STATES—Continued	Financed the collection of statistical data on the export of herbs and drugs from Katmandu Valley, Dharan, Rajbiraj and the establishment of herb centers in Katmandu and Hitaura.
	Commerce and Industry
	Trained about 130 prisoners in the Katmandu jail in weaving and hosiery and garment making.
	Established emporiums for the sale of Nepalese curios at Katmandu, Dharan Bazar and Pokhara.
	Established and financed the National Industrial Development Corporation.
	Financed the construction of the Bureau of Mines Building in Katmandu and provided laboratory equipment.
	Financed construction of an explosives magazine at Godavari and general mineral surveys.
	Established a training program for geologists and metallurgists.
	Education
	Provided primary education to 131,614 adults in 75 development blocks.
	Financed the establishment of 4,164 new schools; the addition of another grade to 320 schools; and training for 175 teachers in primary schools. Established 5 multipurpose schools, and an educational materials center for the printing of books.
	Financed the establishment of normal school training centers at Baghmati Anchal (Katmandu), Ilam, Bhairawa, Doti, Dharan Bazar, Birganj, Piuthan, Nepalganj, Pokhara, Rajbiraj, Dolakha, and a College of Education.
	Financed construction of buildings for colleges at Nepalganj, Rajbiraj and Biratnagar; established Tribhuvan University in Katmandu; and acquired land for construction of a permanent building.
	Finance
	Trained 758 accountants.
	Financed the mapping of about 1.18 million acres and the registration of 426,347 acres in Jhapa, Morang, Saptari, Parsa, Bara, Rautahat, Bhairawa, Pokhara, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur districts.
	Financed the construction of custom houses at Bhairawa, Biratnagar and Bhadrapur, and of guest houses for use of customs inspectors at Nepalganj and Birganj.

Table 6. Foreign Aid Projects Completed in Nepal to 1963—Continued

Donor	Projects
UNITED STATES—Continued	
	Economic Affairs
	Financed the collection of population census data and publication of a preliminary report; and the collection of agricultural census data, of export and import statistics, and pilot survey of family budgets.
	Health
	Financed the construction of a medical building at Bir Hospital and the renovation of its infectious disease unit; supplied it with gas; X-ray and other equipment; and constructed 2 additional hospitals outside Katmandu. Established a nurses' training school which graduated 24 nurses; and the Health Assistants School which trained 66 health assistants by the end of 1962 and sent them out to the districts. Initiated a malaria eradication project for Nepal.
	Irrigation and Water Supply
	Financed the construction of weirs at Gokarna, Pashupati and Arya Ghat; a 23-mile-long canal at Gokarna; and a 2-mile-long canal at Arya Ghat. Financed detailed surveys of the Baghmati, Babai, Sun Kosi and Banaganga Rivers. Financed the procurement of pipe and construction works for clean drinking water at Bandipur; the procurement of pipe for replacement of water mains at Katmandu; and the establishment of a tube well at Tahachal.
	Power
	Financed the construction of a central workshop for the Katmandu electricity authority, the procurement of equipment for conversion of the 60-cycle current in Katmandu Valley to 50-cycle current. Financed a hydrographical survey of all the rivers and the establishment of 6 gauging stations in Katmandu Valley and 1 each on the Kulikhani and Narayani Rivers. Financed a survey of the power potential of the Kali River. Provided local funds in support of the United Nations Special Fund team surveying the Karnali River. Procured land for 4 electrical substations in Katmandu, Thimi, Patan and Chabahil.
	Panchayat
	Financed the establishment of 3,476 *panchayats* at the village level, 14 city *panchayats*, 75 district *panchayats*, 14 zonal *panchayats* and the National Panchayat. Established 55 village development centers covering 6,800 villages encompassing 2.25 million people; trained

Table 6. Foreign Aid Projects Completed in Nepal to 1963—Continued

Donor	Projects
UNITED STATES—Continued	14 *panchayat* development officers, 21 *panchayat* training officers and 90 *panchayat* members trained by the Panchayat Training Organization in Banepa, Lalitpur and Trisuli. Established 626 cooperative societies.
	Transportation Donated 3 DC-3's to the Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation. Financed the improvement of existing roads in Katmandu Valley, construction of a 50-mile road from Hitaura to Narayangarh, and a 30-mile road from Birganj to Hitaura. Erected the Katmandu-Hitaura Ropeway (28 miles), which was completed in 1963. Financed the construction of the Jhapa airport and a public works warehouse at Nepalganj.
	Telecommunications Installed a 1,000-line telephone exchange in Katmandu and 4 telephone nets at Biratnagar, Jaleswar, Pokhara and Katmandu; trained 93 technicians and 43 operators. Constructed a radio network with 57 stations throughout the country. Trained radio operators and technicians.
FORD FOUNDATION	Conducted surveys of cottage industries at the Cottage Industries Center and Home Science Training Center, both in Katmandu; arranged for the exchange of Nepalese and American farm youths; established the Rural Higher Institute at Katmandu; and supplied 2 advisers on economic planning and development.
INDIA	*Agriculture* With the United States, established vegetable and fruit farms at Balaju, Kakana, Godavari and Singha Durbar (Katmandu); research stations at Kirtipur, Dhankuta and Pokhara; orchard nurseries at Rapti, Parwanipur, Godavari, Biratnagar and Singha Durbar (Katmandu); and a trial orchard at Dhunbesi. Opened 11 veterinary hospitals and vaccinated 200,000 annimals. Financed the collections of data on scientific forest management in Mechi and Kanchanpur; and the establishment of the Nepal Forestry Institute, which has trained 48 rangers and 79 foresters.

Table 6. Foreign Aid Projects Completed in Nepal to 1963—Continued

Donor	Projects
INDIA—Continued	
	Commerce and Industry
	Established the Patan Industrial Estate.
	Health
	Financed training the staff for the Maternity Hospital and Child Welfare Center.
	Constructed 15 drinking water projects at Birganj, Amlekhganj, Katmandu Valley and Dhulikhel.
	Transportation
	Fenced Pokhara airfield.
	Started construction of the Katmandu-Trisuli Road.
	Established the Engineering School, which graduated 50 by the end of 1962.
	Constructed and maintained the Tribhuvan Rajpath.
	Constructed and improved Gauchar Airport and other airstrips at Dhangarhi, Nepalganj, Dang, Bhairawa, Pokhara, Barakpur, Birganj, Janakpur and Biratnagar.
	Gave a DC–3 to King Mahendra.
	Power and Irrigation
	Had under construction the Trisuli Dam and multipurpose projects on the Kosi and Gandak Rivers as well as 11 small irrigation projects.
	Established a metal workshop at Balaju Industrial Estate.
	At Jiri and Janipur, built a medical station consisting of a dispensary, a 20-bed hospital building, a nursing home and staff quarters, and a school for 100 children.
	Established dairies and cheese factories with financial aid from New Zealand: the Central Dairy and the Himalaya Cheese Sales Center in Katmandu and 3 cheese plants, Sagarmatha, Kosi and Baghmati.
	Built a suspension bridge with United States aid.
UNITED KINGDOM	*Power*
	Established a plant in Katmandu for the generation and distribution of power, consisting of 3 generators of 250 kilowatts each.
	Transportation
	Built a 30-mile road from Dharan Bazar to Biratnagar.
	Other
	Delivered a printing press for *Gorkhapatra* (a newspaper).
	Provided a botanical expert.
AUSTRALIA	
	Supplied road-building equipment, a water pipeline from Sundarijal to Katmandu, an X-ray machine for the chest clinic, and a new 5-kilowatt transmitter for Radio Nepal.

Table 6. Foreign Aid Projects Completed in Nepal to 1963—Continued

Donor	Projects
AUSTRALIA—Continued	Modernized an old cholera hospital.
NEW ZEALAND	Established a cheese plant and dairy farm; and a sheep farm at Pokhara. Donated 500 pounds of grain seed.
SOVIET UNION	Supplied 2 helicopters and 1 Ilyushin–14, and built the 50-bed Kanti Hospital. Completed a survey of the East-West Highway. A hydroelectric project at Panaoti and a sugar mill at Birganj are being constructed.
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA	Provided IR160 million for Nepalese development programs—of this, an amount equal to $4.2 million was delivered by 1962. Promised the equivalent of about $10 million for construction of the Katmandu-Lhasa highway. Donated a biplane.
ISRAEL	Conducted an agricultural survey; established a joint Nepal Government-Israeli construction company.
UNITED NATIONS	***Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)*** Provided technical advisers for agricultural, dairying and irrigation surveys. ***International Labor Organization (ILO)*** Furnished a manpower adviser and a vocational training instructor at the Craftsmen Training Center in Biratnagar. ***United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*** Provided 2 consultants for an education survey. ***United Nations Special Fund*** Conducted a survey of the Karnali River for a hydroelectric project. ***United Nations Technical Assistance Board (TAB)*** Provided 10 technical advisers—3 in public administration and 7 as operations experts (managers for the Nepal Bank Ltd., the Raghupati Jute Mills and the Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation; supervisors for the Basic Surveys Department, the Electricity Department, and the Forest Department; and 1 legal adviser.

Table 6. Foreign Aid Projects Completed in Nepal to 1963—Continued

Donor	Projects
UNITED NATIONS—Continued	***World Health Organization (WHO)*** Furnished 18 technical advisers for a malaria eradication project, graduate nurse and health assistants' training, and to the Ministry of Health, Education and Electricity; a public health laboratory; smallpox control in Pantan, Katmandu and Bhaktapur, and tuberculosis control.

Sources: Adapted from Nepal, Ministry of Economic Affairs, National Planning Council, *The Economic Affairs Report*, 1, 1963; India, Embassy in Nepal, *Cooperation for Progress*, 1961; U.S. Agency for International Development, Mission to Nepal, Economic Section, Program Office, *External Assistance to Nepal*, August 21, 1962; Narendra Sharma, "Foreign Aid," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, XXXVII, September 20, 1962, pp. 526, 527; and U.S. Agency for International Development, *Nepal—Country Assistance Program*, 1962.

Compared to agriculture, the contribution of other economic activities to national income is extremely low. Only 2 percent of the population was engaged in manufacturing and cottage industry in 1952–54, and subsequently this sector's share may well have declined. With the failure of a number of enterprises since 1952, only a few medium-sized factories are still in operation and cottage industry has shown no signs of growth, although both types of production have been heavily subsidized by the government and by foreign aid.

Employing about 5 percent of the population in 1952–54, commerce and services, including personal, government and military service, probably have increased their contribution to the national income more than any other sector. Commerce in particular has shown great expansion. Imports have steadily increased in quantity and variety. Many new shops have been established in the hill towns and at important trail intersections. It has been estimated that 2 million Nepalese are on the move for trading and other purposes for at least 2 months every year, adding in great measure to the flow of goods and services. In addition, the civil service has vastly increased in numbers, and the foreign aid missions and the projects they have financed have provided employment —largely in road and dam construction—to thousands, most of them in the Katmandu Valley and the Tarai. It is in commerce and services that new opportunities for making money have opened up for Nepalese other than those traditionally privileged.

The structure of the economy appears to differ little between regions, with the exception of the Katmandu Valley, which shows distinctive features. The Tarai is much like the rest of the country except that there are a few manufacturing plants which employ a few thousand. In the 1952–54 census only 65 percent of the population of the Katmandu

Valley was engaged in agriculture, 6 percent in industry and handicrafts and 29 percent in commerce and services. As of 1963, although agricultural production has increased as a result of the introduction of new crops in demand by the large colony of foreigners, it is likely that handicrafts, commerce and services are contributing a far higher share to national income than ever before. In addition to the employment opportunities offered by the civil service, foreign aid missions and projects, tourism has come to employ the services of many, and the goldsmiths and silversmiths of Patan and the craftsmen of other towns in the Katmandu Valley have extended the markets for their products as far afield as Bombay and Calcutta.

Although a start has been made in developing the country, the central problems remain. The most serious one is the absence of roads linking the various parts of the country, a situation which will be solved only by difficult feats of engineering and years of labor. Indian and American experts are trying to raise agricultural productivity, but real improvement, outside of the Katmandu Valley and the Tarai, is dependent on development of transport and marketing facilities. The land tenure system has been legally reformed, and there is widespread hope that through the *panchayat* system the reforms will become effective. Although progress has been slow, it shows signs of accelerating with growing local initiative. Gurkha pensioners, for instance, are reported to be investing in suspension bridges and local irrigation works, which they are building with local labor. But due to the country's lack of financial resources and the extensive infrastructure to be built, the major costs of development will necessarily have to be met by foreign aid for some time to come.

THE PLANS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The Five-Year Plan was launched in October 1956 and terminated in 1961 (see table 7). Its stated purpose was to increase production and employment and to raise the standard of living and economic well-being throughout the country. As stated in the official announcement, its scope was broad, envisaging:

> a simultaneous advance on many fronts: agriculture, forestry, mining industry and commerce; education and health; co-ordinated village development and other multi-purpose projects; transport by roads, ropeways, railways and airways; postal, telegraph and telephone communications; surveys, research and many types of technical training; and the improvement and modernization of governmental institutions to render them more efficient in performing their sole function of service to the nation.

High priority was given to the training of personnel at all levels, improvements in the government administration, reform of the tax system, introduction of a nationwide village development program, initiation of agricultural extension activities, collection of statistics, and expansion of basic services contributing to all aspects of economic development.

Table 7. Nepal's Five-Year Plan 1956–61
(in millions of Nepalese rupees)*

Type of development	Expenditure		Sources of foreign aid
	Planned	Actual	
Village development	42.5	26.7	United States, India
Agriculture and forestry	32.0	6.9	United States, India, United Kingdom, People's Republic of China, Switzerland, New Zealand, Food and Agriculture Organization, World Meteorological Organization
Transport, communications and public works	124.0	94.9	United States, India, United Kingdom, Soviet Union, Australia
Power	30.0	13.3	India, United Kingdom, Soviet Union
Industry, mines and tourism	25.0	10.4	United States, India, United Kingdom, Soviet Union, People's Republic of China, International Labor Organization, United Nations Technical Assistance Board, Ford Foundation
Health	25.0	16.0	United States, India, Australia, World Health Organization
Irrigation and drinking water	20.0	13.1	United States, India, Switzerland
Education	19.0	21.3	United States, India, United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization, International Labor Organization, Ford Foundation
Surveys, research and statistics	12.5	11.7	United States, Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations Technical Assistance Board, World Meteorological Organization
Total	330.0	214.3	

* US$1 equals NR7.6.

Source: Adapted from Nepal Rastra Bank, *Report of the Board of Directors to His Majesty's Government for the Fiscal Years 1957–58, 1958–59, 1959–60 and 1960–61*, p. 3.

During the 5-year period, the authors of the Five-Year Plan estimated that domestic revenue would provide a surplus of NR95 million (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary) to be applied to development projects and that foreign aid would provide NR235 million. However, the government's financial resources proved inadequate to meet even regular budgetary outlays let alone development projects, and, although expenditures on the Plan were only NR214.3 million, the government received foreign aid totaling NR382.8 million during the Plan period.

The Plan got underway slowly and not until the last 2 years of the period did average expenditures reach NR77 million. Implementation of the Plan varied from sector to sector, and even within sectors efforts were unequal from year to year. Agriculture and forests utilized the smallest portion of the planned allocation. Education was the only sector for which actual spending exceeded the amount allotted in the Plan. Most targets were, however, not attained (see table 8). The government statement summarizing the achievements of the Five-Year Plan described them as:

> . . . inconsiderable—in the sense that the development efforts were much too small as compared to our national needs; inconsistent—in the sense that much of the development activity undertaken was not relevant to present national priorities and objectives; and financially insecure—in the sense that it progressively became more and more dependent on foreign assistance.

Table 8. Some Important Targets and Achievements of Nepal's Five-Year Plan

Type of development	Unit	Target	Achievement
Village development centers	Number	48	55
Grain and animal development centers	....do....	25	14
Cottage industry centers	....do....	5	21
Cheese factories	....do....	0	5
Irrigation	Acres	275,000	65,200
Power	Kilowatts	20,000	750
Roads	Miles	900	500
Airstrips	Number	0	7
Primary schools	do....	630	2,000
Middle and high schools	....do....	136	165
Colleges	....do....	0	15
University	....do....	1	1
Increase in hospital beds	....do....	423	105
Health centers	....do....	54	94
Cooperative societies	....do....	6	378
Post offices	....do....	100	208
Telephone lines	....do....	700	1,500

Source: Adapted from Nepal Rastra Bank, *Report of the Board of Directors to His Majesty's Government for the Fiscal Years 1957–58, 1958–59, 1959–60 and 1960–61*, p. 3.

The Three-Year Plan, starting in 1962, primarily incorporated projects carried over from the Five-Year Plan, with a few minor exceptions (see table 9). Emphasis was placed on development works which would make the most effective contribution earliest to national income and to government revenues. The highest priority was given to improvement in government organization and management, including training in all

Table 9. Nepal's Three-Year Plan, 1962–65
(in millions of Nepalese rupees)*

Type of development	Expenditure		Sources of foreign aid
	Planned	Actual	
Government organization, surveys, statistics, publicity and public administration training	89.2	31.5	United States, Ford Foundation
Transport, communications and power	234.5	114.5	United States, India, Soviet Union United Kingdom, People's Republic of China, Japan, Israel
Agriculture, forests and irrigation	91.6	24.5	United States, India, New Zealand, Switzerland, Israel
Industries and tourism.......	152.0	29.6	United States, India, Soviet Union, People's Republic of China, International Labor Organization, Ford Foundation
Education..................	40.0	25.4	United States, India, Federal Republic of Germany
Drinking water supply.......	24.0	....	India
Health.....................	37.0	17.6	United States, India, World Health Organization
Sports and recreation........	1.7	....	
Total...............	670.0	243.1	

* US$1 equals NR7.6.

Source: Adapted from U.S. Agency for International Development, Mission to Nepal, Program Office, Economic Section, *Projectwise Breakdown of the Sources of Financial Resources of the Development Budget FY 1962–63*, July 31, 1962.

fields of public administration and to surveys and the collection of statistics. This category was followed by the expansion and improvement of transport, communications and power facilities; agricultural development; the development of industries on a selective basis; and the consolidation and expansion of social services on a selective basis. Social services (health, education and some village development programs) were accorded the lowest priority, since it was felt that new expenditure on other sectors of the economy might make a better contribution to the nation's development. Total expenditure under the Plan was estimated at NR670 million, of which foreign financial assistance was expected to supply NR500 million. Main donors were: the United States, NR210 million; India, NR140 million; the Soviet Union, NR80 million; the People's Republic of China, NR40 million; the United Kingdom, NR15 million; and the United Nations, NR10 million. In the second year of the Three-Year Plan, programs were being expedited, and it was expected that a number of important projects would be completed by the end of the Plan period.

CHAPTER 17

AGRICULTURE

The economy is predominantly agricultural and pastoral. These activities provide more than 90 percent of the population with a livelihood and contribute an estimated 85 to 90 percent of the annual gross national product. Rice and other food grains are the most important crops and are grown throughout the country up to the limit of cultivation. Animal husbandry is extensive, particularly in the Mountain Region, but custom and religious beliefs have operated to restrict the use of livestock and livestock products.

Fishing and gathering are usually supplementary to agricultural pursuits rather than full-time occupations. Utilization of forest resources, except in the Tarai where they are commercially exploited, is confined to the cutting of timber for building construction and the collection of fuel and animal fodder. Although most production is for family use, the products of the land provide the main exports.

Food consumption per person is low, and increased food production to meet the needs of the growing population is essential to maintain economic and political stability. Sometimes famine is a real threat in many areas while food surpluses are produced in other parts of the country. The means of transport, however, are so inadequate that food cannot be distributed where it is needed. Even though land available for farming and pasture is severely limited by climate and topography, foreign experts have concluded that with better transport and methods of production it could support the population adequately.

Agricultural practices are still primitive and attempts to increase yields are hampered by the shortage of fertilizers and lack of irrigation facilities. Erosion of cropland is a grave problem and plant diseases and drought often take a heavy toll of crops. Agriculture is hindered further by a land tenancy system which in many parts of Nepal provides little incentive for farmers to make permanent improvements in their land and results in extensive farmer indebtedness.

The system of land tenure has presented the government with problems which so far have proved insoluble. Tenancy and absentee landlordism are widespread. Until promulgation of land reform legislation by the present government, tenants had no protection against arbitrary eviction nor was there a limit to the rents they were called upon to pay. Government action appears to have reversed a trend toward ever greater concentration of land ownership and a consequent increase in tenancy but, on the whole, implementation of its reform legislation has bogged down in the absence of an effective administrative machinery to carry it out. Government efforts to determine individual land rights have been hindered by an almost total lack of land records and a cadastral survey proceeds slowly.

The government has recognized that economic development calls for a revolution in agriculture. In the Five-Year Plan (1956–61) and the Three-Year Plan (1962-65) emphasis has been on increasing the area of irrigated land and on improvements in agriculture, animal husbandry and forestry. Numerous training institutions and training programs have been established, most of them with technical assistance from abroad. Gradually a cadre of technicians is being developed and the results of research are being applied in the rural areas.

In order to introduce more productive practices in the countryside, a village development program was initiated with high hopes for its effectiveness in raising farm incomes. This program has now become an integral part of the *panchayat* system which the King devised in order to afford the rural populace the opportunity to participate in local development. The United States, India and Switzerland have rendered extensive financial aid and technical assistance in all of these programs.

AGRICULTURAL REGIONS

The country can be divided into three distinct agricultural regions on the basis of altitude, which varies from less than 200 feet above sea level in the Tarai to over 26,000 feet in the Himalayan massif to the north. Within less than 100 miles all the climatic zones are approximated: tropical and subtropical up to 4,000 feet above sea level, temperate from 4,000 to 10,000 feet and alpine from 10,000 feet and up, with permanent glaciation at the higher altitudes. Eighty percent of the rainfall occurs during the monsoon season, which lasts from June through September; it is heavier in the eastern than in the western part of the country (see ch. 3, Geography and Population).

The Tarai

The Tarai, a continuation of the low, alluvial Gangetic Plain of northern India, stretches along the southern border. The land is level and the soil is generally fertile. The area, cut by many rivers and streams, represents about one-fifth of the area of the country, but it contains about two-thirds of the arable land. Rice, corn, wheat, millet, potatoes and oilseeds are the main crops. The Tarai also has excellent forests which are being depleted rapidly through overcutting and poor enforcement of conservation techniques. The Tarai is better developed and more accessible than the rest of the country, but in certain areas a high incidence of a very virulent strain of malaria has been an obstacle to economic development. Much has been done to eradicate this scourge but the problem is still grave (see ch. 3, Geography and Population; ch. 6, Health and Welfare).

The Mountains

The mountains between the Mahabarat Lekh range north of the Tarai and the Tibetan border cover about 65 percent of the country's total area. They are characterized by steep slopes and poor soils. Pasture and forest cling to the sides of the mountains. Overcutting has left timber stands of commercial value in only a few isolated, almost inaccessible, areas. Farming is far more varied than in the Tarai. Crops are grown on narrow, bench-type terraces built on the side of the mountain slopes up to an elevation of 13,000 feet and on valley floors. The low mud walls that enclose the terraces also retain the water from the monsoon rains and prevent it from flowing away too fast. A large percentage of the terraced fields are irrigated by small canals taken off from streams higher up. On the very high slopes, above 13,000 feet, lie alpine pastures which support a partially nomadic population during the short summer. In the eastern part of the mountains the very narrow valleys lend themselves to animal husbandry in the upper reaches and to subsistence crop production in the lower. The western region is dry, but extensive farming and livestock raising are carried on (see ch. 3, Geography and Population).

Katmandu Valley

The Katmandu Valley, with an average elevation of 4,500 feet, is geographically part of the Mountain Region but warrants separate consideration. It covers about 230 square miles of rich soil watered by the Baghmati Nadi River. The Valley is densely populated and almost every foot not occupied by structures or roads and paths is intensively cultivated. A wide variety of grains, vegetables and fruits are produced. With irrigation, as many as three crops a year can be grown (see ch. 3, Geography and Population).

LAND USE

Only rough estimates of the land use pattern are available. These show that over a third of the land area lies under perpetual snow or consists of alpine meadows, settlement sites and river beds. Less than a third is covered by forests. Only about one-fourth of the land area is under cultivation and reclaimable wasteland is limited. As the population increased, as much land as possible was brought under cultivation and, except in the Tarai, has about reached the limits imposed by climate and topography. Although patches of cultivated land occur in the west and north, agriculture is largely confined to the Tarai and to the major river valleys of the central and eastern part of the country (see table 10).

Table 10. Land Use in Nepal
(in thousands of acres)

Type	Acreage
Forest	*11,200
Land under crops	9,600
Alpine meadows, settlement sites, river beds, etc	8,040
Under perpetual snow	5,440
Reclaimable wasteland	2,560
Total area	36,840

* 8,640,000 acres are state owned.

Source: Adapted from Ferdinand Okada, "*Facts About Nepal*," January 1963.

In the Tarai, farms average between 5 and 10 acres and are even larger in the Western Tarai, varying from 7.5 to 15 acres. In the hills, where agricultural conditions are less favorable than in the Tarai, the cultivated area in an average farm has been estimated at 1.5 acres. In the densely populated Katmandu Valley the average size of a farm appears to be 1 to 1.5 acres operated by a family unit of 7 members. A survey carried out in the Valley by a United Nations expert in 1953–54 showed that only 22 out of 268 farms had a surplus production.

It is estimated that only 20 percent of the land under cultivation produces two or more crops annually. The remaining acreage could be utilized more effectively if irrigation facilities were available and if the growing of winter crops could be introduced more widely. Vast areas in the Tarai in particular are left fallow because of the long dry season which averages 8 months. In many places in the Tarai recurrent floods have caused severe erosion and sedimentation damage; in the mountains erosion is a continual threat to the cultivable fields as a result of the steep gradients on the deforested slopes.

Irrigation

Experts are agreed that a greater increase in agricultural production can be achieved by irrigation than by any other means and it has been estimated that seven of the major rivers have the capacity to irrigate over 5 million acres. Yet in 1963 only about 100,000 acres were irrigated by canals and an unestimated number of acres by private irrigation works constructed by the farmers themselves.

The most common type of irrigation is accomplished by tapping water from a river with a simply constructed dam and conveying it to the fields through canals. The dams, built of hand-laid stones, are generally from 3 to 5 feet high and extend across the width of the river. In general there is no provision for distribution of the water supply, and fields near the water source receive an adequate supply, while distant fields may or may not be well served.

In 1951 the entire irrigation works in the country consisted of the Chandra, the Jagadish and the Juddha Canals, irrigating about 40,000 acres in the Tarai. The Chandra, built in 1928, had its headworks on the Trijuga River, a tributary of the Kosi, and irrigated about 33,000 acres. The Jagadish, built in 1942, irrigated 2,000 acres, and the Juddha Canal, built in 1946, provided water to about 5,000 acres.

During the Five-Year Plan period (1956–61) a number of projects were undertaken and 11 were completed, adding about 60,000 acres to the area under irrigation (see table 11). Of this newly irrigated acreage, 58 percent was in the central Tarai, 25 percent in Katmandu Valley, 13 percent in Pokhara Valley and the rest in small, isolated projects in other parts of the country. Almost all of these projects were financed by aid from the United States and India. Additional projects underway or planned should increase the land under irrigation by over 300,000 acres (see table 12). This estimate does not include the land which will be irrigated by the Kosi and Gandak multipurpose projects being constructed by India in Nepal for the benefit of both countries. In addition to the generation of electricity and flood control, the Kosi project is expected to provide irrigation for over 200,000 acres in the southeastern Tarai, and the Gandak should irrigate over 140,000 acres in the Western and central Tarai.

Table 11. New Large-Scale Irrigation Projects in Nepal, 1961

Name of project	District	Irrigated area (in acres)
Tilawe Nadi	Bara, Parsa, Rautahat	16,000
Jhanj	Bara, Parsa, Rautahat	15,026
Tika Bhairav	Katmandu Valley	7,500
Lower Vijaypur	Pokhara	7,000
Sirsia-Dudhara	Bara, Parsa, Rautahat	5,000
Mahadev Khola	Katmandu Valley	3,750
Baghmati	Katmandu Valley	2,500
Budhanilkantha	Katmandu Valley	1,600
Phewa Tal	Pokhara	1,400
Baglung	Baglung (West No. 4)	400
Ashe Khola	Chautara (East No. 1)	120
Total		60,296

Local irrigation works, such as tanks, wells and small drains and channels constructed by the farmers themselves, play a greater role than major works in the development of irrigation in Nepal. They are estimated to supply water to about 1 million acres. From 1952 to 1960 about

Table 12. Irrigation Projects Under Construction or Planned in Nepal, 1961

Project	District	Irrigated area (in acres)
Under construction		
Tinau	Palhi Majhkhand	50,000
Manusmara	Rautahat	18,000
Hardinath	Mahotari	9,000
Khutti	Mahotari	9,000
Dunduwa	Banke-Bardia	6,400
Planned		
Babai	Banke-Bardia	100,000
Kamala	Saptari	100,000
Rapti	Chisapani Garhi	90,000
Baghmati	Sarlahi	30,000
Kotkhu Godavari	Katmandu Valley	3,125

3,700 wells were dug under village development programs, bringing about 55,500 acres of land under irrigation. In addition, the construction of small drains and channels extended irrigation facilities to another 90,000 acres, mostly in the Eastern Tarai. Such works are not dependable in many places and frequently fail to ensure an adequate and regular supply of water.

Erosion

The scanty soils on the steep mountainsides are subject to constant erosion, which is widespread and severe. Heavy cloudbursts frequently cause landslides and avalanches of boulders in the mountains. At times a side of a mountain will slide into the valley carrying the terraced fields with it. Erosion has been accelerated by overgrazing and the expansion of the cultivated area at the expense of the forest cover. Throughout the country the vast forest growth is in places being destroyed by cattle. Poor range, increasing livestock numbers and the lengthy dry season are responsible mainly for the practice of using the leaves of trees for fodder. This usually includes the cutting of whole branches, which weakens and destroys the trees, thus contributing to deforestation and subsequent soil erosion. Although there are regulations for protection of the forests, these are not enforced and an afforestation program has not yet gotten underway.

LAND TENURE

The land tenure system inherited from the old regime was complex and diverse in character. It differed not only from district to district but from holding to holding in the fields of a village. Lack of uniformity appears, in the main, to have derived from historical factors, notably that in the process of establishing the Kingdom the usages and customs of the congeries of petty principalities into which the country had been divided were continued more or less unchanged. Unless a direct political clash were involved, the conquering dynasty tended to follow the line of least resistance and to refrain from making changes in existing institutions. Within this framework, however, many exceptions to the general rules were made at the whim of subsequent rulers. The present government has taken various measures designed to bring uniformity of land tenure out of the chaos it inherited.

Under Nepalese law, all land belongs to the state, and land taxes are the rents assessed by the government. This is the basic structure of land tenure and is known as *raikar*. Numerous variations, however, occur. Although the state never sells land, in the past in a number of ways and under a variety of conditions it divested itself of the right to collect the land tax on portions of land in favor of private individuals (*birta*) or institutions (*guthi*). Also at the time the Shah dynasty (1742–75) was uniting Nepal politically, it granted royal charters bestowing special privileges with regard to payment of land tax to some 15 vassal states (*rajya*) and to certain ethnic groups (*kipat*).

Holders of *raikar* land can neither sell nor give it away; they can only sell their tenancy rights. They are, in effect, tenants holding the land on lease from the government to which they owe rent, that is, tax. They can be evicted for nonpayment of rent but for no other cause, and tenancy rights are inheritable. The rent charged by the government is roughly one-sixth of the produce, although in the hills it is often one-half. At the village level, taxes are collected by nonofficial agents, known as *talukdar* in the hills and *zamindar* in the Tarai; these posts are inheritable. They receive a 5-percent commission on all collections. In addition to a commission, the *zamindar* is also allotted land by the state for his own personal use. *Talukdar* and *zamindar* have been notorious for mismanaging land records and exacting unpaid labor and illicit levies from the people. Under the Agricultural (New Arrangements) Act of April 1963, such offices will be abolished and taxes will be payable to the Gram Panchayat (Village Council) for deposit with the Mal Adda (Revenue Office).

There is wide variation in the terms and conditions that are attached by the state to *birta* grants of land. Provisions in many *birta* grants imposed restrictions on transferability or inheritability and sometimes entailed performance of specific functions. Most *birta* holdings in effect at the time the Ranas were overthrown, however, were grants in perpetuity of revenue from certain designated lands to Rana families and their retainers. *Birta* grants were estimated to cover 10 percent of the total land in the Tarai, 50 percent of the land in Katmandu Valley and 25 percent of the land in the hills. Some *birta* grants were over 100,000 acres; one was for nearly a million acres. A *birta* grant was considered to imply transfer of ownership from the government, and taxation, if any, was nominal. Under the Birta Abolition Act of 1959, however, all *birta* holdings were converted to *raikar* and hence ownership reverted to the state. The registration of such holdings for tax purposes required by the Act had still not been completed at the end of 1963.

Guthi tenure applies to any land assigned by rulers or donated by individuals for the endowment of schools, orphanages, temples and other religious and charitable institutions or purposes. It cannot be confiscated nor can it revert to any other type of tenure. *Guthi* land is not taxed. Although much of the *guthi* land assigned under the Ranas and earlier is managed by the government, many *guthi* were donated by individuals on condition that they or their descendants would look after its management. This system is the more common.

The *rajya* system of tenure applied to the land of 15 vassal states scattered over the western hill Districts of Salyan, Doti, Jumla, Syangja, Gulmi, Baglung and Piuthan. Hereditary rulers of these states held royal charters which limited the central government's collection of the land tax within their boundaries. In order to promote uniformity of tenure, this system was abolished by the Rajya Abolition Act of 1961 and all lands were converted to *raikar*.

Kipat is essentially a form of communal tenure and relates to the lands of certain ethnic groups. The most prominent of these groups are the Limbu of Dhankuta and Ilam Districts and the Tamang in eastern Nepal. *Kipat* land owned by other small groups is found in Palpa, Achham and Dailekh. No tax is assessed against such lands by the government but an ownership fee is collected by a tribal official known as the *subbha*, whose powers and functions vary from one area to another. *Kipat* land cannot be alienated from the ethnic group but it can be sublet to others. *Kipat* tenure can be traced back to the 1770's when the country was incorporated into Prithvi Narayan Shah's rapidly expanding empire. Rather than outright conquest the areas were brought under the general suzerainty of the Gurkha dynasty through negotiated settlement between Prithvi Narayan Shah and local chieftains. Despite the present government's policy of achieving uniformity of tenure based on the *raikar* pattern, it has found it inexpedient to make any changes in the *kipat* system.

Most farmers do not own the land they till but are tenants at will. Estimates of the amount of land cultivated by tenants run as high as 80 percent; the lowest estimate is 65 percent. Tenancy is likely to be more widespread in the Tarai, where several holdings of 1,000 to 10,000 acres have been reported, than in the hills and the Katmandu Valley. Leases are not written and are normally for short terms. The practice is to renew leases and frequently the tenancy agreement continues throughout the lifetime of the tenant, but there are no standard terms of tenancy. Rents may be paid in cash or in kind and the agreement frequently includes provision for the tenant to work at some time for the landlord.

The rising pressure of population on the limited amount of cultivable land has resulted in increased demands for farms, and rents are high. Rents vary from two-thirds of the produce in Mahottari District, which is the second most densely populated area, to one-third in Kailali and Kanchanpur, which are among the most sparsely populated. Even in the hills, there are many cases in which the best land in the village brings rent amounting to two-thirds of the crop. Since there is great competition for land it is in the interest of the landlord to evict tenants as frequently as it is possible to increase the rent.

The Lands Act of 1957 sought to remedy the twin evils of insecure tenancy rights and unregulated rents. It fixed either one-half of the gross produce or the usual rent, whichever was lower, as the maximum amount payable by the tenant. Landlords were prohibited from receiving additional payments for social and religious ceremonies and from charging interest payments higher than 10 percent. Forced labor was abolished. Tenancy rights were secured to any tenant who cultivated a holding for 1 year. Eviction of a tenant was prohibited as long as he regularly paid the rent and only by process of law could eviction be affected. The Act further stipulated that tenancy rights should be inheritable but not transferable without the consent of the owner. An amendment enacted in 1959 made such rights salable even without the consent of the owner. The effect of the law has been nullified largely by the reluctance of most landlords to provide peasants with receipts for rent payments.

In 1956 the government, realizing the need to maintain accurate records of agricultural lands and cultivators in order to facilitate land reform, passed the Lands and Cultivators' Records Compilation Act. This Act provided for the compilation of records of the various rights and interests in the land, the total rent or land tax payable thereon, and such other details as would be requested by official order from time to time. For this purpose the governor (*bada hakim*) in each district was directed to form three-member village councils consisting of representatives of the landowners and cultivators and one member nominated by the government. Such councils have been appointed in Chitwan, Palpa and Thapa Districts and tribunals have been formed to settle disputes, but no further action has been taken.

In order to carry out land reform the need for a scientific land survey has become obvious to the government. Accordingly, in 1956 a cadastral survey was begun. By the end of 1962, 1.7 million acres had been surveyed. The survey of Kailali, Kanchanpur and part of Surkhet District has been completed. Operations had been started but not completed in Katmandu Valley, Makbanpur, Bara, Parsa, Rautahat, Morang, Jhapa, Saptari, Nebalpur, Syangja and Pokhara. The achievement fell far short of the target. *Birta* holdings had to be converted into *raikar* before being entered in the land records and *birta* holders did not come forward for this purpose nor would *talukdari* and *zamindari* produce their records. Although the cadastral survey has been completed for over a million acres, particulars of land rights have been recorded for only 336,467 acres.

PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Farming, animal husbandry, fishing and gathering are the major productive activities. Lumbering, handicapped by lack of transportation facilities, is largely confined to the Tarai. Most farming is of the subsistence type although in some areas a surplus over family needs is sold in market towns. Industrial crops, grown in the Eastern Tarai, supply a few factories. Water buffalo, yak, cattle, sheep and goats are numerous. Oxen, water buffalo, yak and a few donkeys, ponies and elephants are used for draft. Fishing and gathering are ordinarily part-time activities but they often supply important supplements to the diet and cash income.

Farming and animal husbandry are usually joint undertakings in which the members of a family or larger kin group work together to produce a livelihood. Men, women and children are assigned tasks in accordance with custom. The men may be away from home for long periods, so women play a particularly important role in both farming and stock raising.

Farming

Farming is carried on in much the same way as it has been for centuries. Some modern equipment is in use on the larger farms in the Tarai, but modern practices have not been widely adopted. Field work is done with crude hand tools. Only in parts of the Tarai and in the hills is the plow used, drawn by oxen or water buffalo. The land is intensively cultivated where water is sufficient and on the bench-type terraces which cover the slopes of the hills to the top. Animal manure, oilcake and some crop residues are used as fertilizers but are insufficient in quantity and unsatisfactory in quality.

Rice is the most important subsistence crop, occupying 55 percent of the land under cultivation. Twenty percent is planted in corn and millet and 10 percent in wheat. Smaller proportions of the arable land are devoted to the production of potatoes, oilseeds, tobacco, jute, sugarcane, buckwheat and vegetables.

Rice is grown from the southern border up to altitudes of 5,000 and 6,000 feet above sea level. Where irrigation facilities are available, two rice crops a year are grown, even in the mountains. Because of the great demand, rice is planted at too-high altitudes and on poor, unirrigated soils where other crops, such as corn and potatoes, would produce more food. Rice is grown in water and, although some land is irrigated, the majority of rice growers are dependent on rains during the monsoon. Even the monsoon frequently does not supply sufficient water for the entire rice-growing season so that yields are generally low in areas without irrigation.

The preparation of the fields for rice planting begins about a month before the monsoon. In the Tarai and the hills, the farmer breaks the land—which has become hard and dry during the winter—with a wooden nail plow. Large, hard clods are left which the women powder with a long-handled wooden mallet. When the rains come and the fields are flooded, the farmer puddles the soil with a team of oxen or buffalo drawing a wooden harrow. In Katmandu Valley, where animal-drawn equipment is not used, the farmer turns the ground with a broad, heavy mattock called a *kodale*, which he also uses to puddle. After puddling, the rice shoots, previously started in seed beds, are transplated by the women with ritual and prayers for a good harvest. Weeds are pulled by hand, a family chore. At harvest, the rice stalks are cut with sickles and threshed with flails. The grain is stored in bins and the straw is carefully preserved for use as cattle feed in the winter.

Corn has the widest distribution of any crop. It is grown from the Tarai up to the plant production limit at 13,000 feet but is most important throughout the mountains. It is usually planted on drier lands which are not suitable for rice farming. In some areas, however, where premonsoon showers bring sufficient rain, corn may be grown in the rice fields and harvested just before the rice must be planted. Millet is the second most important crop in the hills and is grown primarily because it does well under drought conditions. Frequently, it is grown in combination with corn.

Wheat and barley are more important than rice to the people of the higher altitudes. Wheat is an important winter crop but its cultivation is largely concentrated in Katmandu Valley and the Tarai. Poor preparation of fields, lack of fertilizers, inadequate irrigation and prevalence of plant diseases are responsible for the low yield. It is believed that, since 80 percent of the cropland remains idle during winter months, the total wheat crop could be greatly increased by planting winter wheat. Barley is grown up to 11,500 feet and on the poorest and driest soils. Other than among the Bhote, in the north, people have not developed a taste for it; otherwise it could be a more important crop.

Potato growing has been adapted to almost every soil and altitude. Potatoes grow up to 14,000 feet and occasionally even higher. At present the tubers are small but if diseases could be controlled it is believed that more food could be produced by growing potatoes than by any other crop. Although yields are reduced at high altitudes, even there potatoes are considered more productive than any other crop.

The most important oil crop is mustard, raised principally in the south and west. Yields are low and methods of oil extraction are crude and inefficient. Since oil is in great demand, efforts are being made to improve processing techniques and to introduce better varieties.

Beans and other legumes are grown almost everywhere in the country except at high altitudes. Most are preserved by drying. Soybeans in particular give high yields of good quality at all altitudes from 4,000 feet to the limit of plant production.

A wide variety of fruits and vegetables is grown. Every farmer grows a few fruit trees suitable to the climate. Mangoes, bananas, peaches, oranges, plums, guavas and jackfruit are among the fruits found. Only in Katmandu Valley are fruits and vegetables grown commercially but acreage is small. There are also a few well-kept orchards which are owned by members of the Rana and royal families and by government officials.

The production of commercial crops is limited to the southwestern Tarai. Jute supplies the raw material for the two jute mills at Biratnagar and is exported to India. Sugarcane is cultivated on small farms which supply the Morang Sugar Mills, also located at Biratnagar. The sugarcane grown at lower altitudes in the mountains is made into a coarse sugar or molasses at home.

Animal Husbandry

The number of livestock is estimated to be 7 million, of which 30 percent are cows and bulls, 26 percent oxen, 17 percent buffalo, 25 percent sheep and goats and 2 percent hogs. There is no estimate of the number of yaks, horses, donkeys and tame elephants. Chickens and ducks are so numerous as to be counted in the millions.

Only cattle, buffalo, yaks, sheep, goats and poultry are considered to be of economic significance. They produce a limited amount of milk, *ghee* (clarified butter), meat, hides, eggs and wool. The buffalo is the source of most of the milk, cheese and *ghee* produced in the country. Its milk yield is relatively high—800 to 1,000 pounds during a 10-month lactation period—and the butter fat content is good. Other than the buffalo, productivity of livestock is low; hens, for instance, average only 25 to 30 eggs annually.

Cattle are raised for manure and to supply oxen for draft. They are sacred, are not killed and their meat is not eaten by Hindus. Although the killing of poultry and livestock other than cattle is not forbidden on religious grounds, their meat is not considered suitable for people of the highest caste, but it may be eaten by others. Hides are exported to India for processing. Sheep and goats are raised for wool and hair and for animal sacrifice. Among the Bhote, they are also used for meat. Most of the wool and hair is used by the household to produce blankets, rugs and heavy clothing; some is exported. Above 7,000 feet, the yak is the all-purpose animal supplying milk, meat, hides, hair and draft.

Most cattle and buffalo are kept by farmers with small holdings, the farm household's livestock usually consisting of 3 to 5 cows or buffalo. In the hills there may be 6 to 10 sheep or goats in addition. The animals are usually herded along the roads and trails or on common grazing grounds by day and confined in or near the farmhouse at night. To the farmer, keeping livestock is only loosely linked with farming and is regarded as a secondary occupation. In the high mountains, however, from 7,000 to 17,000 feet, where there are many herds of cattle, sheep, yaks and cattle-yak crossbreeds, herding becomes the primary means of earning a livelihood. The owners and herdsmen of these animals live a seminomadic life. In December, January and February the animals graze at the lower elevations. As the weather becomes warmer in the spring, the animals range upward as the forage grows, until in July and August some are grazing at 17,000 feet. Horses are bred in the Jumla area for sale in India.

Pastureland has never been surveyed but is estimated at 4 to 4.5 million acres. Only the pastures of the high Himalayas, which are difficult of access, are known to be good. In the hills, between 3,000 and 10,000 feet, animals graze mostly in the forests and on slopes too steep for farming; in the Tarai, in woodland and on lands too poor to be farmed. Vegetation is plentiful only during the monsoon when it rains. As fodder crops are seldom grown, during the rest of the year animals go hungry and seem to exist on crop residue, weeds and grasses. This defective nutrition has caused a pronounced debility of the livestock which, combined with numerous animal diseases, has contributed to their low productivity.

Forestry

The forests, covering about one-third of the country and irregularly distributed, represent an important economic resource even though in accessible areas they have been subjected to destructive practices for a number of years (see fig. 13). The largest area is a compactly wooded tract of about 16,700 square miles stretching across the northern Tarai, the Bhabar and Siwalik Range (Churia Hills) and the Mahabharat Lekh range. The Himalayan forests to the north, estimated to cover 800 square miles, do not form compact woodlands but cover the heights and valleys up to 13,000 to 14,000 feet. Almost all the forests are government owned.

Commercial exploitation has been confined to the southern forest belt; although the Himalayan forests are rich in timber, they are inaccessible without roads or ropeways. Lumber is the major product, particularly sal, a hardwood used for construction timber and railroad ties, sissoo, used for making furniture, and semal, a soft wood used for making plywood, matches and paper pulp. Most of the lumber, which is processed in a few sawmills in the Tarai, is exported to India. The coarse sabai grass, the ground cover, is also harvested and sold to India for the manufacture of paper pulp. In addition to supplying a major export, the forests provide construction materials and fuel for domestic use. It is estimated that at least 750,000 cord feet are used annually in building construction and in the production of farm implements. Wood is the principal fuel, and the amount of timber cut each year for this purpose cannot be estimated, but it is known to be very great.

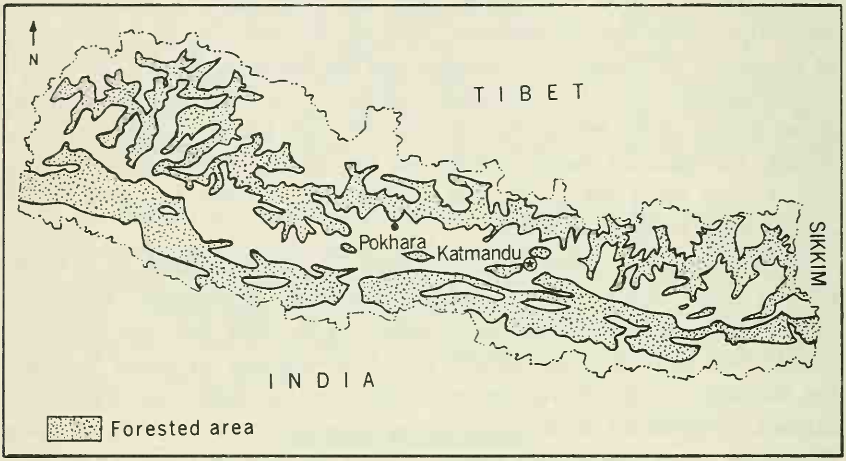


Figure 13. Forest Areas in Nepal.

The heavy demands on some forests in the Tarai have resulted in alarming deforestation which has been aggravated by poor land-management practices. Livestock owners burn the grass cover before the monsoon in order to produce tender shoots for the livestock. Forest burning also occurs in parts of the Kosi River basin and in the pine forests of the Kali and Karnali valleys in the west, areas where shifting agriculture is practiced. Overcutting by Indian contractors has ruined the Tarai forests; and the Mahabharat Lekh forests are dwindling, leaving only the Bhabar forests as the country's main accessible productive resource.

The effective utilization of forest resources requires scientific management which can be achieved if the national forest policy announced in 1959 is implemented, especially with regard to forest conservation and afforestation. The authority of the Forest Service also needs to be extended to all phases of timber production including methods of exploitation. In support of forest development, India and the United States have been providing technical assistance during the last few years, but beginning with 1964 they are expanding their activities to include complete surveys of the southern forest belt.

Fishing

Fishing is an important part-time activity, particularly in the lakes and the lower reaches of the rivers. The upper reaches of many streams, however, appear to have been overfished and need to be stocked. With United States aid and technical assistance, fish farms have been established at Godavari and Janakpur and breeding and distribution centers at Parawanipur, Biratnagar, Bhairawa and Pokhara. Various fishponds in Katmandu Valley have been cleaned and stocked. More possibilities remain, however, for increasing fish production.

Gathering

Throughout the country the gathering of a variety of edible roots, indigenous fruits, nuts and wild honey adds to the limited diet. Many medicinal herbs—aconite, pyrethrum, belladonna, ipecac and licorice, among others—grow wild and it has long been the practice for the people in the mountains to collect them for sale in the market towns of northern India.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

In addition to institutional reforms in the land tenancy system designed to give farmers an incentive to increase output, the government has engaged in many activities which are expected to contribute significantly to agricultural production. These include research in agriculture, horticulture, animal breeding, forestry and fisheries and the establishment of institutions and programs which provide technical education in all aspects of agricultural production, dairy farming, water conservation and forestry development. The government hopes to encourage the adoption of new techniques and improved technical knowledge in the countryside by means of the Village Development Service. After 10 years of semi-independent operation in a few development blocks, in 1963 it became part of the *panchayat* system, which has been assigned a major role in rural development. Government activities have been financed almost entirely by foreign aid and carried out with technical assistance from abroad, mainly from the United States and India.

Education and Research

The first agricultural training institute in the country was established in 1952, a joint venture of a United States aid mission and the Nepalese Department of Agriculture. Set up in Katmandu, the institute's training program was designed to prepare multipurpose workers through whom various assistance projects could be channeled to the villages. The course consisted of a 1-year term, and instruction included field and crop culture, entomology, plant pathology, livestock diseases, improved farm tools, irrigation, extension methods, health and sanitation, literacy and social service. In 1953 a second institute was opened in Birganj, and in 1956 a training course in home science for women was added to the curriculum of the institute in Katmandu. No facilities were available for the training of agricultural specialists, however, until 1957 when the United States established and equipped the School of Agriculture. To provide subprofessional personnel, intermediate between the two training programs, India founded and staffed the Rural Institute at Katmandu in 1959. India also established the Forest Institute at Hitaura for the training of forest rangers.

Numerous Nepalese have also received on-the-job training at the research laboratories and experimental farms equipped by the United States and India. United States aid has provided laboratories for soil analysis, plant production studies, seed testing and the study of medicinal plants. It has also assisted in developing six field experiment stations which include on the same premises three horticultural research centers and four livestock improvement farms. India has established a veterinary research laboratory in Katmandu and dispensaries in other parts of Nepal as well as fruit and vegetable research stations, research substations, and trial orchards and nurseries.

Village Development

The Village Development Scheme, initiated in 1952, was the first joint program undertaken by the government of Nepal and a United States aid mission. It was designed to develop a nationwide service for the introduction into the villages of technical assistance programs which would increase the food supply and reduce illiteracy and disease. Since administrators and technicians for such a service were few, the institutes at Katmandu and Birganj, for training village workers and village work supervisors, were started. After completion of the course, village development workers were posted at 6 development centers—Biratnagar, Pokhara, Hitaura, Butwal, Katmandu and Ilam—to work in villages in the area. Each village development worker served 3,000 villagers. He lived with the farmer, giving him advice, encouragement and technical assistance. Through the village development center the worker could call upon the services of specialists in health, agronomy and animal husbandry. Activities of the village development workers included: encouraging the use of fertilizers and of better seeds; installing hand pumps to provide safe drinking water; building roads; organizing youth clubs; fighting malaria; demonstrating improved farm implements; constructing irrigation canals; improving livestock; encouraging the building of schools and libraries; improving village sanitation; and immunizing against such diseases as cholera, typhoid and smallpox. By 1963, when village development workers were assigned as secretaries to the Gram Panchayats (Village Councils), which had been granted authority to initiate and support small-scale development activities, there were only about 1,000 of them, far less than the 4,200 needed. The United States is continuing to provide financial aid and technical assistance in support of this project.

CHAPTER 18

LABOR

In early 1964 the country had an estimated 6 million persons between the ages of 11 and 60, nearly all of whom were economically active at least part of the year. Many below that age, some as young as 5 or 6, also worked. Possibly 90 percent of the economically active group were farmers and their families, who wrested a generally meager livelihood from crop raising and animal husbandry, supplemented by earnings from the sale of craft articles and other items and occasional jobs undertaken by members of the family when they could be spared from work in the fields or with the herds. These subsidiary activities often required travel over long distances and sometimes absence from home for extended periods.

Nonagricultural sectors of the economy other than trade were little developed and offered few employment opportunities. Manufacturing was limited to a small number of factories concentrated chiefly in Birganj and Biratnagar in the Eastern Tarai, most of whose employees came from villages in the surrounding area, both in Nepal and across the border in India. The technical, managerial and professional class included only a few thousand persons.

The basic unit of production in the often isolated villages of the countryside is the household and, for some tasks, groups of related households. In these family-oriented small communities, working relationships are governed by kin ties and strong feelings of mutual obligation among relatives. Typically, the rural household produces most of what it consumes and, since tenancy is widespread, any surplus is likely to go into land rent. Kinsmen, neighbors and friends commonly assist one another on a reciprocal basis in such activities as herding cattle, plowing, spinning and building sheds and houses.

Since the fall of the Rana regime in 1951, the government has taken a number of steps to improve conditions in the rural areas. Under the Five-Year Plan (1956–61) public primary and secondary schools were started in many localities where they had been lacking. Advanced training centers for technicians in forestry, agriculture and public health were also set up, in many cases with foreign aid. But an acute scarcity of capital, a critical shortage of power and transport facilities and the weight of traditional methods and attitudes continued to hinder economic growth and the effort to lessen the pressure of an expanding population on a difficult environment.

LABOR FORCE

Age and Sex Distribution

During the planting and harvesting seasons, it is usual in the rural areas for everyone except the aged and the very young to work in the fields or to tend livestock. Children over 10 years of age are considered old enough to do adults' works, and the average child of 5 or 6 is expected to begin to help with household chores and other light tasks.

Certain kinds of work are done exclusively by men; others exclusively by women; and some are shared by both sexes, the pattern varying from one locality or ethnic community to another. On the farms specific tasks are assigned to women, others to men. Spinning and weaving are primarily women's work, but in the off season, men may participate in this activity too. On the other hand, men, almost exclusively, tend the herds.

Structure

It is almost impossible to estimate the number of wage earners in the labor force as compared with independent farmers and family workers. On the basis of the 1952–54 census, however, it appears that the majority of both men and women fall into the self-employed or family worker category. Presumably the number of wage earners in nonagricultural occupations increases at slack periods in the agricultural cycle when many farm people seek temporary employment as construction workers, porters or domestic servants.

Aptitudes and Skills

The rural people are highly proficient in the techniques of an agriculture evolved in the course of centuries of coping with the special conditions of the country's environment. The Sherpa, for example, crossbreed yaks and oxen to produce a hybrid which is particularly well adapted to the harsh climate and poor pasturage of the high valleys and slopes. The carefully terraced fields, with simple but efficient irrigation systems, found throughout much of the rugged interior, attest to farming skills. So does the ability of cultivators in the Katmandu Valley to get out four crops a year, despite the proscription against the use of animals for draft within sight of temples, of which there are hundreds in that area.

Certain castes are also known for their mastery of particular handicrafts. Notable among them are the Newari metalworkers and wood carvers, whose art has been flourishing in the Katmandu Valley for centuries. Leatherworkers, tailors, ironworkers and goldsmiths form an important component of the work force.

EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS

Rural

Most villagers, though primarily farmers and herdsmen, combine other work with their agricultural pursuits. In some villages, for example, a few men engage at least part time in carpentry, tanning, housebuilding or stone carving; others in tailoring or bootmaking. Women spin and weave wool, yak hair and other fibers, and make clothing for their families. Village-made fabric, carpets and articles of clothing, such as shawls and aprons, are carried to town markets—sometimes over long distances—to be offered for sale along with clarified butter (*ghee*), hides and medicinal herbs and drugs which women and children of the mountain region gather in the woods.

In October and November, when the end of the monsoon rains facilitates travel, many persons, both men and women, take temporary work carrying goods from one town to another. Farmers ordinarily only do this when their crops are in and there is no work to be done in the fields. The continuing development of air transport is reducing this source of cash income in the countryside, but human bearers will remain important in the movement of freight for a long time to come. Another common part-time occupation is road construction.

Only two regular occupational groups other than farmers appear to play an important role in rural economic life—Brahman priests and those castes traditionally associated with particular crafts. Metalworkers, tailors and blacksmiths live partly by their trade, but generally some member of the family cultivates a small plot of land on which food for the household is raised.

Farmers use few tools, and the average family requires help with certain field tasks which must be accomplished in a short period of time. The need is met by the kinsmen. In some Sherpa communities, for example, it is customary to arrange informal work groups, consisting usually of five or six young persons from related households, whose main function is to pull the heavy plows as a team, working each other's fields on a reciprocal basis. Another arrangement is for a man who owns both livestock and land to tend someone else's cattle with his own in return for a fixed amount of work in his fields.

Kinsmen and neighbors, in addition to exchanging labor, may perform services for each other for payment in goods or cash. Cash payment is becoming more common, and a few relatively well-to-do farmers are accustomed to hiring help.

Agricultural labor is much in demand for short periods when crops are being planted and harvested but, except in areas where more than one crop can be grown each year, there are months of relative idleness for much of the work force. The result is low productivity, substantial underemployment, low average farm income and widespread indebtedness.

Poverty drives many villagers, especially those in the mountains, temporarily to towns in the Tarai, the Katmandu Valley or India in search of ways to supplement their meager income. Some movement of this kind goes on throughout the year, but the peaks are generally reached with an exodus from the farms in late fall and a return to them in early spring. The migrants include men of all ages and some young women, moving singly or in groups. Individuals usually go in search of work; groups generally set out to sell or exchange loads of farm produce, herbs, medicinal roots or handicraft articles. Many travel as far as India or to the Katmandu Valley, hoping to find employment as porters or domestics. Others—mainly men from the mountain regions—enlist in Gurkha units of the Indian and British Armies. In 1963 an estimated 50,000 Nepalese were serving in the Gurkha brigades of the two armies. The arrangement helped to reduce the pressure of population on the land and provided a major source of cash income for many rural households for whom pensions of retired or deceased veterans or the remittances sent home by the servicemen frequently made the difference between solvency and indebtedness.

Many village women and girls go to distant towns in search of work as household servants. A few set up and operate small overnight shelters along tracks in well-traveled parts of the country or trek to India with small loads of produce to sell. In autumn and early summer in the high Himalayas, Sherpa traders make their way over the difficult passes to Tibet with rice which they exchange for salt, subsequently using the salt to buy rice in the lower regions of Nepal (see ch. 19, Industry and Trade).

The Towns

Most of the self-employed persons in the towns are traders, small businessmen or artisans. A few operate workshops or mills, where they engage in such pursuits as oilcrushing, rice pounding and the manufacture of furniture and household equipment, usually with only one or two persons assisting them.

The largest employer in the country is the government. Offices of the various ministries and agencies in Katmandu, as well as such publicly owned corporations as the Nepal Rastra Bank and Nepal Trading Ltd., have large staffs of officials and clerical assistants. Still other government functionaries staff the district and local administrative offices. The prestige of government employment and the lack of alternative job possibilities combine to produce a huge surplus of candidates for all civil service positions in Katmandu. Teaching posts and other government jobs in outlying areas, however, often go begging, because few persons qualified to fill them are willing to forego the attractions and relative comforts of the capital city, particularly without special pay allowances.

The country's small industrial labor force is largely illiterate and unskilled. A 1963 report states that major modern industrial plants, including two jute processing mills, two match factories, a cigarette factory and a sugar plant, had a combined work force of only about 5,000 persons; several thousand additional workers were employed in smaller factories. The largest single employer of industrial labor was the Biratnagar Jute Mills, with some 3,000 persons on its payroll. There are no employment offices. The network of family connections is such that the villager coming to town in search of work almost invariably has some relative there to whom he can turn for help in finding a job. If this method fails, he will then apply directly to possible employers.

In late 1963 a law was passed which, although it did not set a minimum wage, called for the payment of "reasonable" rates to all workers. The prevailing hourly wage for unskilled labor at that time was about NR2.00 (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary) a day, and was slightly higher in the Katmandu Valley. Workers on a large hydroelectric project who were being paid at that rate reportedly were having difficulty maintaining themselves. A pound of potatoes and a pint of rice cost them half a day's earnings, and they had to provide their own shelter.

JOB TRAINING

Opportunities to acquire specialized training have increased rapidly since the end of the Rana period. In 1961 the country had 24 special technical schools with an enrollment of about 1,500 persons as compared with only two schools with a handful of students in 1951. Included among these schools were training institutions for persons in nursing, business management, accountancy, public health, forestry, agriculture, cottage industries, telecommunications and other fields. Most of the schools were established with foreign aid. The United States Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps are active in this field.

The Three-Year Plan (1962–65) gives high priority to apprentice training and the development of intermediate-level skills within Nepal itself. It calls for the instruction of 7,000 persons in various specialized fields exclusive of cottage industries, including nearly 600 agricultural and more than 450 forestry experts.

FORCED LABOR

One of the few social reforms under the Ranas was the freeing of the slaves in 1924 by Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher Rana (1901–29). The release of some 52,000 persons held in slavery was arranged at a reported cost to the government equivalent to $1.4 million; an additional 23,000 slaves were given their freedom without any demand for compensation by their owners. Some 40 years after the issuance of this decree, slavery had entirely disappeared, although the relationship of a number of ex-slaves and their descendants to their former masters still was characterized by a considerable degree of economic dependence and strong feelings of loyalty.

LABOR RELATIONS AND ORGANIZATION

Welfare and Regulatory Laws

The Factories and Factory Workers Acts of 1959 and 1963 and their amendments provide legal protection and certain benefits to the nation's industrial workers, although they do not apply to workers in other sectors of the economy. The laws prescribe: a 10-hour day and a 54-hour week; 10 paid holidays a year; up to 15 days' sick leave a year at half pay; 1 day's paid vacation for very 20 days worked after the first year of service; premiums for overtime and holiday work; and accident compensation. There are, however, no specific stipulations about pensions, provident funds or maternity benefits. Among the other important features of the 1963 act are provisions for regular inspection by the government of places of work in respect to matters of the health and welfare workers, and for the appointment of labor welfare officers in factories with more than 250 workers and for assistant welfare officers in those with over 2,500 workers.

The principal functions of the welfare officers are to raise workers' living standards, to encourage them to form self-regulating committees, to maintain contact with outside labor organizations, to inculcate in the workers a sense of responsibility to their employers, and to prevent workers from organizing strikes by illegal means. More importantly, they are expected to act as liaison between management and workers and to formulate labor policy after study and consultation and to submit it to the Palace Secretariat or the ministries concerned.

Except for the omission of retirement benefits, the provisions in these laws prescribed most of the benefits to which labor might realistically aspire. In practice, however, many of the provisions were never put into effect.

Organized Labor

The fewer than half a dozen unions which existed in the country before 1963 had only a small membership and were essentially political in character. The strongest of them were a transport workers' union and an organization of jute mill workers. What little political influence these unions might have had was almost entirely eliminated when in December 1960 King Mahendra dissolved the Parliament and most of the political leaders fled the country.

A new labor organization which will elect two representatives to the National Panchayat was formed by the government in April 1963. Known as the Nepal Labor Organization, it has an estimated strength of at least 14,000 workers and is structured with local and plant unions at the lowest level, succeeded progressively by district and regional organizations and a national one. The government appoints 2 of its 3 principal officers who, with 7 other persons, compose its 10-member executive committee.

CHAPTER 19

INDUSTRY AND TRADE

The development of industry and the expansion of trade are major goals of the Nepalese Government, but progress is hampered by lack of electric power and transportation facilities. The country's many rivers are a great potential resource of hydroelectric power, and a development program—largely financed by India—is underway, though still far from completion. India has expressed an interest in buying power when a surplus is produced. In a generation it may become one of Nepal's most important exports.

Mountainous terrain and the necessity for depending on tracks and human carriers for most transport have imposed a pattern of local and regional isolation on much of the country. The two short railroads and most of the few motor roads are in the Katmandu Valley and the Tarai. The road to Katmandu Valley is the only motor road linking the Tarai and India with the interior. Elsewhere, journeys into the interior must be made on foot, and all goods must be carried on men's backs, because most tracks are too steep for pack animals. From Katmandu Valley the easiest way to reach most interior points is by going back to India and then up into the hills from the Tarai. Internal air transport has been developed, but only Katmandu has an all-weather airstrip. External air transport connects the country with India and Pakistan.

The lack of facilities to transport goods to markets limits the scope of mining and manufacturing. Mines are few and small and productivity is low. Manufacturing is confined to a few plants producing consumer goods—easy to carry and in great demand, such as matches and cigarettes—and to processing local agricultural products, mainly for export. With the exception of textiles, kerosene and such luxuries as flashlights, soap and cosmetics, all of which are imported, most consumer goods are made by artisans in the bazaar towns or scattered through the villages.

Foreign trade is almost entirely with India, which is easily accessible from the Tarai. A diminishing amount is with Tibet. Nepal's exports are mainly agricultural products; imports consist largely of manufactured goods and petroleum products from India and salt from Tibet. Domestic trade is on the whole local in character and for the most part appears to follow the north-south routes from India to the passes in Tibet. Katmandu, on one of these routes, is the largest market center, serving the greatest concentration of consumers in the country.

FUEL AND POWER

The scarcity of fuel and power is not likely to be alleviated in the near future. Wood, coal and petroleum products provide the main sources, although some small rice mills are run by water power. The use of charcoal seems to be confined to the Magar smelterers in the hills. Wood, generally used in households and in handicraft establishments, is becoming increasingly expensive as the forests recede from the consumption centers. Increasing the supply of wood depends on forest conservation, the extension of roads and tracks into the more inaccessible regions, and the replacement of porters with transport facilities which can carry heavier loads. Although coal has been discovered, it is not mined commercially and no petroleum sources have yet been found. Thus, both coal and petroleum products are imported from India; except in the Tarai, shortages are chronic and prices high as a result of transport difficulties.

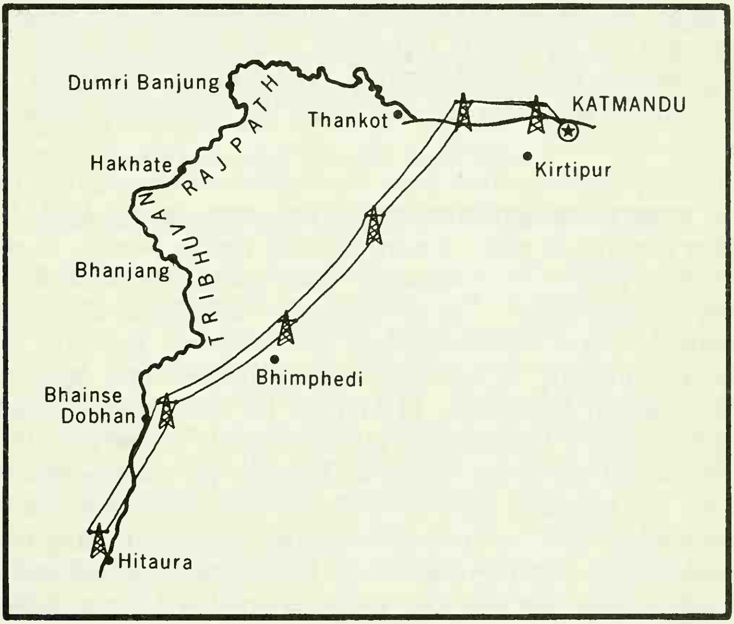
Even though the hydroelectric power potential from Nepal's rivers is considered one of the greatest in the world, it has been little exploited. In mid-1963 three hydroelecteric power plants were in operation. Two, with a combined capacity of 1,350 kilowatts, were installed by the Ranas in Katmandu Valley, one in the late 1930's and the other in the early 1940's. Another, with a capacity of less than 800 kilowatts, was built in the 1940's in Biratnagar. Most of the country's total capacity of less than 8,000 kilowatts was produced in diesel and thermal plants built with foreign aid funds at Katmandu and Biratnager in the late 1950's. Even in these two cities, however, the supply of electric power was grossly inadequate to meet requirements for street lighting, operation of the telephone system and domestic consumption, much less permit the development of industry.

Recognizing the importance of plentiful, inexpensive power to the development of the country, the government, in the Five-Year Plan (1956–61), inaugurated an ambitious program—made possible by foreign aid—to utilize Nepal's hydroelectric resources. Progress has been slower than anticipated, but in mid-1963 a number of projects were underway.

The Kosi River project in Biratnagar District, being constructed by the Indian Government, was scheduled for completion in 1964. It was expected to generate 1.8 million kilowatts, of which Nepal was to get 10,000 kilowatts without cost, which would ease the power shortage in Biratnagar and the rest of eastern Nepal. India was also building a dam on the Trisuli River, 50 miles northwest of Katmandu. Power from this project, expected to be completed in 1965, was estimated at 10,000 kilowatts, to be used in Katmandu Valley, the Rapti Valley and Birganj. According to a Swiss survey, to the northeast of Katmandu, at Panaoti village on the Kosi River, the Soviet Union was constructing a dam which expected to generate 2,400 kilowatts and was scheduled for completion in 1964–65. The Trisuli and Panaoti projects were planned to meet Katmandu's immediate requirements.

At Thadokhola a hydroelectric plant was being constructed with

British aid. It was expected to be completed by 1964 and will supply power to the United States-built Katmandu-Hitaura ropeway (a cableway built on towers, similar to a ski lift, which will carry 25 tons of cargo per hour in steel bins attached to the cables) (see fig. 14). A number of other power projects remained in the planning stages. The most ambitious was the Karnali River project in southwest Nepal, which had been surveyed by the United Nations Special Fund and would provide, when completed in 10 to 15 years, vast quantities of hydroelectric power for export to India.



Source: Adapted from United States Operations Mission to Nepal, *Glimpses of Progress in Nepal—1952–1961*, Katmandu, USIS, 1961, p. 90.

Figure 14. Route of New Katmandu-Hitaura Ropeway in Nepal.

TRANSPORTATION

In mid-1963 modern transportation facilities were still limited (see fig. 12). There were about 500 miles of motorable roads, all in the Tarai and the Katmandu Valley. About half were surfaced; the remainder could be used only in good weather. The Tribhuvan Rajpath, completed by Indian army engineers in 1956, connected Katmandu Valley with the Tarai and the Indian border. It was used by between 23 and 50 motor vehicles (buses, trucks, jeeps and passenger cars) per day, depending on the weather. About 130,000 passengers have been carried over the Rajpath per year; no estimates have been made regarding freight.

Two railroads were in operation in the Tarai—a 29-mile line connecting Amlekhganj with Raxaul in India and a 22-mile line from Jaynagar, also in India, to Janakpur. The track, at present rarely used, extends about 18 miles further on to Bijalpura. Both are narrow gauge (2 feet, 6 inches) and cannot be connected with the railroad system of northern India. They carry about 240,000 passengers per year. Freight declined from over 46,000 tons in 1958 to about 23,000 tons in 1962 as a result of an increase in truck transport.

A 14-mile ropeway, with a capacity of 5 tons per hour, built in 1927 and owned by the government, still carried much of the freight from Dharsing in the foothills to Katmandu Valley during the monsoon. In 1951 it carried almost 570,000 tons, operating all year round; but in 1961 it was in operation for only 6 months and carried about 80,000 tons.

Air transport, since other types are impeded by the physical features of the country, has grown rapidly. There were, in mid-1963, 10 fair-weather airports, of which 5 were in fairly regular service, in addition to Gauchar Airport at Katmandu which could accommodate DC-3's almost all year round. The government-owned Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation linked Katmandu with interior towns and with cities in India and Pakistan. In mid-1963 its fleet consisted of 4 DC–3's and 2 MI–4 (Russian) helicopters. In addition, the Communist Chinese have given the King a single-engine biplane capable of carrying 10 or 12 passengers and the Soviet Union, an Ilyushin–14, which is similar to a Dakota. No estimates were available on total passengers and freight carried, but in 1961, on its major internal routes connecting Pokhara, Bhairawa, Simra and Biratnagar with Katmandu, it carried over 37,000 passengers and almost 230 tons of freight. Indian Airlines Corporation also provided service with Indian cities, and Pakistan International Airlines with Dacca, in East Pakistan.

Most traffic, however, is over the tracks which run from the passes on the Tibetan border in the north to a number of towns on the Indian border in the south. There are about six such major routes as well as numerous paths which lead into them from villages within the watersheds or which lead away from them to avoid frontier and customs posts. The tracks are very old and are usually wide enough for loaded porters in single file to pass each other. Many thousands of miles are paved with smoothed rocks, and thousands of steps have been built up and down the steep gradients. The tracks, however, have not been kept in repair, and in many places landslides and heavy rains have destroyed pavement and steps. In some places suspension bridges have been swept away and not replaced. Dangerous makeshifts have been substituted.

On only a few tracks, such as the Palpa-Pokhara-Dana route to Mustang and the Nepalganj-Dailekh route to Jumla, is it possible to use pony, donkey and mule caravans. Most transport is by porters who carry about 80 pounds per man in a basket balanced on the back by a headband across the forehead. At the higher altitudes, at Jumla and Dana for instance, loads are transferred from porters to yaks.

Only the mountain people appear to seek employment as porters. The Sherpa are famous for porterage at high altitudes in association with mountaineering expeditions. Porterage is a seasonal occupation. Both men and women act as porters, but they are also farmers and herdsmen and unless well paid will not carry loads when the fields and herds require their attention. In addition, during the monsoon, travel may become impossible in many parts of the country. In mid-1963 porters were earning from NR5 (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary) to a maximum of NR10 and NR12 per day and might refuse to carry loads farther than 3 to 5 days' journey from home.

MINING, MANUFACTURING AND HANDICRAFTS

Mining, particularly of iron, copper and silver, was in the past a major industry, and abandoned mines are found throughout the country. Miners worked only those minerals which could be used locally and confined their efforts mainly to deposits close to the surface. Some metal mines were still in operation in mid-1963. Methods were in general the same as they had been for centuries. Smelting and refining were carried on near the mines, and the bars were sold to local blacksmiths and coppersmiths to make farm tools and household utensils.

Those mines which have been visited by Western metallurgists and geologists are reportedly owned by business men and traders from the area. Miners and smelterers are Magar and also describe themselves as *kami* (a Newar caste name for smiths and metalworkers), but information is lacking as to whether they are a caste among the Magar or have simply adopted the Newari name for metalworker. Mining and smelting are full-time occupations for both men and women. They are paid by receiving a percentage of the smelted metal as wages. The total number of persons employed in mining and smelting is unknown.

Investigation by foreign geologists under various foreign aid programs has resulted in location of a few new deposits which were being worked in mid-1963—mica and lignite in Katmandu Valley and limestone near Hitaura. Annual production is small—about 5,000 tons of lignite, about 8 tons of copper and some 240,000 cubic feet of limestone. The Bureau of Mines, with a new, modern, fully equipped laboratory, has been set up with United States aid, and geological surveying is continuing.

Mining and handicrafts are traditional industries in Nepal, but the first factory—the Biratnagar Jute Mills—was opened only in 1936. It was almost entirely financed by Radha Krishna Chamaria of Calcutta, who was also in charge of management. Its success led to the establishment of some 35 other industrial enterprises for the processing of sugar, rice and *dal* (lentil-based sauce used on rice) and the production of consumer goods, such as matches, cigarettes and cotton textiles. Most of these firms were financed by members of the Rana families, although many were managed by Indians. The firms showed some profit during World War II, but by mid-1963 only a few were still in operation—two jute mills including the pioneering firm, a sugar mill, two match factories, three cigarette factories and a sawmill. A match and a cigarette factory were located at Birganj, the sawmill at Hitaura, a cigarette factory at Katmandu, one at Pokhara and the others at Biratnagar.

The jute mills' annual output has averaged about 10,000 tons, most of it exported to India. The match factories have been producing about 130,000 gross of boxes and the cigarette factories about 24,000 tons annually, which has not been sufficient to supply domestic demand. The sugar mill averaged almost 3.5 million pounds per year over a recent 8-year period, exporting a third to India. No other production figures are available.

About 6,000 persons are employed in the factories; over 3,000 work at the Biratnagar Jute Mills, which is the largest single employer of labor in Nepal. The weavers at this factory are Pakistanis, and the rest of the employees, including the unskilled, are largely Indians. It has been alleged that most of the wage earners in factories in the Tarai are Indian, but this is denied by representatives of United States and United Nations aid missions. No complete study has been made concerning national or ethnic origin of factory employees, but it has been reported that some of the hill people are found among the workers.

The factories are all joint stock enterprises. The government, through its Nepal Industrial Development Corporation (NIDC), holds all the stock in the Hitaura sawmill and a majority of stock in the Raghupati Jute Mills, not by choice but because it has not been possible to induce anyone to purchase the shares. The Chamaria family of Calcutta still owns 50 percent of the stock in the Biratnagar Jute Mills and 40 percent of the stock in the Morang Sugar Mills. The remainder of the stock is owned by Nepalese. Nepalese also own and operate the cigarette and match factories.

The numerous failures among industrial enterprises over the last 15 years have been attributed to such factors as the restrictive effect of inadequate transport on the movement of raw materials and on the growth of markets for industrial produce, the absence of suitable credit and banking institutions and the inadequacies of public administration and services, such as water and power.

In its efforts to promote industrialization the government has sought to expand transport, water and power facilities, and in 1959 it established the NIDC, which offers industry financial and technical assistance. In addition to granting loans or purchasing stock, NIDC prepares studies of land, buildings, utilities, machinery and equipment and supplies working capital required for the profitable operation of industrial establishments. It also analyzes markets, including problems of sales, distribution, advertising and promotion. Most of the existing factories have received financial and technical assistance from NIDC, and several new establishments, largely for food processing, are in prospect.

NIDC, with United States aid, has also established an "industrial estate" in the suburbs of Katmandu, which provides space and other facilities, such as power, water and maintenance to privately owned small-scale industries. In mid-1963 the "estate" contained a manufacturing unit which produced tools for farmers and artisans and a woodworking unit which made furniture and other wooden products from government timber. The government has accepted aid from the Soviet Union for the construction of a sugar factory at Janakpur and a cigarette factory at Birganj, and from Communist China, a cement factory to be built at Hitaura and a paper factory, at Nepalganj.

Although factories in the modern sense are few, over 700 small industrial establishments known as cottage industries were registered with the government in 1962. They are of two categories. One is the factory type of small industry in which a few hired workers are employed, and the owner divides his time between management and production. Rice, flour and vegetable oil mills represent by far the bulk in this category, followed by enterprises producing furniture and woodwork, marble and ceramic goods and by service workshops. The second category is the traditional or artisan type of establishment which generally uses only manual labor (except for some mills which use water wheels), and it is mainly a family enterprise. The artisan combines the functions of worker, manager and salesman. These traditional enterprises are engaged in oil crushing, rice pounding, pottery making, hand spinning and weaving, blacksmithing, metalwork (curios and cutlery) and bamboo and straw work. Among the Newari, each of the traditional crafts is practiced almost exclusively by a particular caste, and a number of families of the same caste may constitute the production unit (see ch. 5, Family and Social Structure).

Artisans and craftsmen produce most of the pottery and other household utensils, furniture, tools and equipment in general use. They also build and repair houses and temples and make bricks and tile. The handmade-paper industry, which flourished at one time, is still carried on in villages at 8,000 to 10,000 feet, where suitable grass and vegetation are abundant. The product is invariably of rough quality but is very durable. Ropes, mats, fishnets and head ropes made from the fibers of plants and baskets made from bamboo are very common craft products in the hills and the Tarai. Woolen spinning and weaving is a subsidiary occupation among the Sherpa, Tamang and Gurung. They make rugs, carpets, mufflers and blankets, which they sell in the bazaar towns or rural markets. In the Katmandu Valley, Patan is the center for metalworking and Thimi and Bhadgaon, for pottery making. The goldsmiths and silversmiths of Patan, in addition to their traditional wares, have begun producing quantities of cheap metal and wooden knicknacks for the tourist trade.

In the rural areas artisans have only a limited local market, and no more than one or two practicing the same craft are likely to be found in a village or group of villages. The number of craftsmen and artisans is unknown and no estimates have been made of their contribution to the economy.

FOREIGN TRADE

The foreign trade of Nepal is almost entirely with its neighbors—India on the south and Tibet on the north. Overseas trade has been growing, largely the result of shipments from countries supplying foreign aid. About 95 percent of foreign trade is with India, which borders on the Tarai, where most of Nepal's exports are produced and where access to Indian railheads is made easy by the Royal Nepal Government Railway and a few motor roads. Trade with Tibet, which can be reached only by tracks leading across a few high passes, is negligible in comparison. Overseas trade is conducted through the ports of India, principally Calcutta (see ch. 3, Geography and Population).

Until 1950 trade with India was governed by a treaty signed with the British in 1923 which provided that no duty be levied on Nepalese imports. It was replaced in 1950 by the Treaty of Trade and Commerce between Nepal and India. The new treaty recognized the unrestricted right of Nepal to commercial transit of all goods and manufactures through the territory and ports of India but required Nepal to apply Indian tariffs. The Nepalese Government objected that this was not in Nepal's best interests since Indian tariffs are protectionist in character and when the treaty was renegotiated in 1960, all restrictions on Nepalese trade were removed. India, however, specified that, considering the revenue requirements of the Nepalese Government, Nepal could continue to levy import and export duties on goods imported from or exported to India. As in the 1950 treaty, India agreed to provide transit facilities to Nepal and freedom from customs duties for goods in transit. A warehouse has been made available in the port of Calcutta, where all goods in transit may be stored.

Nepal's commerce with Tibet has existed since ancient times. Until 1956, formal trade relations were based on the treaty of peace concluded in 1856, at the end of the second war between the two countries (see ch. 2, Historical Setting). It provided for the establishment of a Nepalese trading post at Lhasa, which was permitted to deal freely in all kinds of merchandise. Tibet also agreed not to levy taxes on goods imported by the Nepalese merchants or require them to pay any fees. A hundred years later, after successfully invading Tibet, the People's Republic of China signed a treaty with Nepal which permitted the nationals of both countries to trade with, travel in and make pilgrimage to those places in each country as agreed upon by the two governments. Provision also was made for the establishment of an equal number of trade agencies of one government within the territory of the other at specified locations. Nepal, in addition to the agency at Lhasa, established trading posts at Girang Dzong (Kyirong), Nyalam Dzong (Kuti) and Zhikatse (Shigatse). In 1961, China offered to construct a highway between Katmandu and Tibet which would make possible an expansion of their commercial relations. Despite the treaties, however, there are indications that Nepalese merchants are being squeezed out of Tibet by the Chinese state trading corporation and by the imposition of currency restrictions (see ch. 13, Foreign Relations).

In October 1962 a trade agreement was signed with Pakistan, followed by a transit agreement in January 1963. India subsequently granted to Nepal the same rights of transit for goods to and from Pakistan that applied to overseas shipments into Indian ports. The agreements, hailed as a great advance in Nepal's program for diversification of trade, have so far shown negligible results.

The principal exports to India are rice, wheat, jute, forest products, oilseeds and *ghee* (clarified butter). Principal imports from India are salt, cotton textiles, metal products, kerosene, gasoline, diesel oil and lubricants. Rice is the main export to Tibet; salt and wool, the principal imports. Export of small quantities of jute and tea to overseas countries has developed since the late 1950's as a result of Nepal's attempts to diversify its foreign trade. Machinery and transport and telecommunications equipment are the main imports from overseas countries. Official figures, known to be underestimates, show a rise in imports to NR287.5 million and in exports to NR130.8 million in 1959–60. No estimates have been compiled for subsequent years and no information on quantities shipped or received is available.

It is generally recognized that there is a considerable volume, estimated to be between 20 and 50 percent, of exports and imports which are not recorded. This arises from the difficulty of establishing comprehensive customs control on all frontiers, particularly where such frontiers are not clearly marked and are crossed by a multiplicity of tracks. In the absence of reliable statistics it is not possible to estimate balance of trade, much less balance of payments. It is known, however, that credits and cash payments have been rising since 1956 as a result of disbursement of foreign aid funds and an increase in the number of tourists.

Other important invisibles are the remittances sent to their families by Nepalese working abroad or by Gurkha soldiers on duty in the armies of India and the United Kingdom and pensions paid by these governments to retired Gurkha soldiers in Nepal. The Ministry of Finance has estimated that NR10 million flows into Nepal annually as pensions to British ex-servicemen alone and that pensions from the Indian Army total an even greater sum.

DOMESTIC TRADE

Throughout the country domestic trade and foreign trade are closely interwoven. Most families produce their own food, and Nepalese craftsmen can supply the simple farm implements and household utensils in demand by the average consumer, but pharmaceuticals, cotton cloth, kerosene, salt and luxuries such as flashlights and cosmetics must be brought into the country. In Katmandu Valley and the Tarai, both Nepalese products and imports flow through the usual commercial channels of wholesale and retail trade. In the hills, however, special trading patterns have developed, most notably the exchange of Tibetan salt for Nepalese rice, which has been organized by the Sherpa of Khumbu in the eastern Himalayas and the Thakali of the Mustang area in the west.

Katmandu Valley has the largest concentration of consumers in the country, who are served largely by the shops and markets of Katmandu. The old part of the city is a large bazaar where tiny shops at the street level of four- to five-story houses line miles of winding alleyways. Some shops specialize in one type of traditional merchandise, such as brasswork or *kukri* (a Gurkha knife) or embroidered caps or baskets. A number sell grains and spices. Others have a melange of goods for sale. In open squares among the alleys are vegetable and fruit markets where members of farm families sell their produce. At the edge of the bazaar is the wide, modern New Road lined with larger shops which sell Nepalese curios to tourists and imported shoes, textiles, pharmaceuticals, canned goods, hardware and general merchandise. Most retailers in the bazaar are Newar. The merchants who deal in imports are likely to be wholesalers, with connections in India, as well as retailers. They are usually Marwari, an Indian people who specialize in commerce.

The Tarai and northern India have long been a trading area where Nepalese have been accustomed to sell their products to Indian traders and to buy necessities in the bazaars of the market towns on either side of the border. Here all the commodities available on the Indian market are for sale. Generally the hill people bring their products to these towns once a year and having sold them return to their homes with the necessities they have purchased with the proceeds of their sales. Each town in the Tarai serves an area from 50 to 70 miles into the interior.

In the hills there are towns such as Pokhara and Baglung along the north-south routes to the frontiers which are market centers for both the long-distance trade and for villages in the vicinity. Although the number of shops is smaller than in Katmandu, the variety of goods offered is greater. Many items are on sale which are not obtainable in the capital. The Sherpa towns of Jalbire near the Kuti Pass and Namche Bazar near the Nangpa La supply commodities in demand by the Tibetans, such as gaudy textiles and food grains.

In certain parts of the country, fairs are held at times of religious festivals. They may last from 2 to 40 days. Many people wait for such fairs to purchase most of their necessities. In other parts of the country, markets organized locally are held once or twice a week, and rice, *ghee,* mustard oil and curd are sold or bartered for cloth, salt and kerosene brought to the market by traders.

The most important long-distance trade is in Tibetan salt. In the east the Sherpa of Khumbu near Mount Everest have exploited both their geographical situation between Tibet and the lower regions of Nepal and their ability to transport goods across high altitude country in developing the Tibetan trade. Salt is needed both for home consumption and for resale, and the shifting of the exchange rate between salt and grain along the north-south route from the nearest Tibetan market to the source of the grain supply illustrates the character of Sherpa trade. A Western scholar has noted:

> Sherpas can exchange rice at Tingri Dzong in Tibet at a rate of 4 measures of rice for 9 measures of salt. At the border, where they are sometimes met by Tibetan traders, the rate is 4 measures of rice for 7 measures of salt. As no rice grows in Khumbu this commodity must be purchased in the lower regions of Nepal and there the Sherpas pay for the rice in salt. Thus a Sherpa buying 10 measures of salt in Tibet has to pay only 4 measures of rice and on re-selling the salt in Dingla obtains in exchange 30 measures of rice. The gross profit is thus 26 measures of rice but the transaction involves one trip to Tibet of at least 10 days' duration and a trip to Dingla and back, taking another 8 to 10 days.

Trade with Tibet is confined to two seasons: autumn (October and November) and early summer (May and the first part of June). From late November until May such passes as the Nangpa La are snowbound, and during the monsoon the journey is too difficult for men and animals with loads.

In central Nepal the Thakali who live along the Mustang route to Tibet, the easiest line of communication with India, almost all engage in transportation and commerce. Tukucha is the main town and trading center. Here the Thakali trade Nepalese wheat, barley and rice for Tibetan salt. Caravans of yaks, cattle and mules transport the salt to Nepal via the Gya La and the Larkya La, and mules and ponies are used to carry it to the lowlands. From the lowlands, rice, dyestuffs and other goods are transported in the same way to Tibet by the same route. A large fair is held in Larkya during August and is open for a month. Many people flock to the fair from Tibet and the western districts of Nepal. Traders go twice to Tibet between April and September and twice to the Tarai between October and the following April. The richer traders pay one visit to some large center such as Delhi or Calcutta.

CHAPTER 20

FINANCIAL AND MONETARY SYSTEM

The monetary system and public finance in the past were organized to serve the needs of the Rana regime. Coinage was struck in the Rana Maharaja's mint and, although he exercised his hereditary office in the King's name, government revenues were, in effect, the Maharaja's property. The reassertion of royal power in 1951 ended Rana domination, but more than a decade later the fiscal system showed only slight changes. A central bank was created in 1956 and the one commercial bank has expanded its operations. The powers of government to control or create credit are still severely limited. Deposit banking is little known; the level of savings is low; and there is no capital market. Most of the development program has been financed with foreign aid. The extent to which the country outside of Katmandu Valley and the Tarai is monetized cannot be estimated, but it is generally recognized that the use of money is becoming more widespread

Government budgets have been published each year since 1951 but often bear little relationship to actual expenditures and revenues. A closer approximation of expenditures is being achieved in recent budgets, but actual revenues, which are almost wholly derived from land taxes and customs duties, remain difficult to estimate. Expenditures have been increasing as the responsibilities of government have widened. The growing deficits have been met partly by issuing currency and drawing on reserves but primarily by foreign aid. In order to raise more revenue the government has taken steps which include the development of a uniform system of land taxation, the extension of the tax base and the introduction of improved methods of collection. Taxes in general are still low and fall most heavily on the rural population, but various new taxes have been decreed to increase the share paid by town dwellers. In mid-1963 the government was groping toward more efficient methods of mobilizing the country's financial resources.

CURRENCY

Both Nepalese and Indian currencies are in circulation. Both were legal tender throughout the country until April 1960, when the government declared the Indian rupee no longer legal currency in the Katmandu Valley, although no restrictions were placed on its use in the rest of the country. At the same time it was made illegal to refuse to accept Nepalese currency anywhere in the country except in the districts bordering on Sikkim and India. Indian currency is used almost exclusively in the Tarai and in the border districts of the extreme east and west. There are no reliable data on the total value of currency circulating in the country nor of the total amount held by Nepalese nationals at home or abroad. In July 1961 the Nepal Rastra Bank estimated the total at NR152.2 million and between IR150 million and IR200 million (for value of the rupee, see Glossary).

Wide fluctuations in the rate of exchange between the two currencies in the three decades before 1960 led to a loss of confidence in Nepalese currency. To stabilize the exchange rate the government in April 1960 offered unlimited convertibility of the Nepalese rupee at the rate of NR160 to IR100 and declared that government revenues were to be paid thereafter in Nepalese currency. Since then a stable exchange rate between the two currencies has been maintained, and the Nepalese rupee is coming into increasingly wider use. Consideration is being given to steps which would lead to the establishment of Nepalese currency as the sole medium of exchange in the country.

Since 1960 exchange rates for other than Indian currency have been established by bilateral negotiations with a few governments—the United States, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Burma, Japan and West Germany. The rate of exchange of the United States dollar is NR7.6, giving the rupee a value of about 13 cents. Nepal became a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in 1961, and the government hopes that a par value for the Nepalese rupee will soon be established.

Coinage in Nepal dates from the fifth century, and the current names for coins, from the fifteenth. The value of coins was the equal of their silver content until 1948 when it was reduced to a third of a coin's value. In 1953 silver coinage was abandoned and replaced by token metal coinage. Paper currency notes were first issued in 1945. The minting of coins, formerly a prerogative of the Maharaja, was transferred after the overthrow of the Ranas to the Ministry of Finance and for a time at least was an important source of profit for the government. The issuance of paper currency was transferred from the Ministry of Finance to the Nepal Rastra Bank on its establishment in 1956.

Nepalese currency uses the decimal system, 100 paisa equaling one rupee. Coins are minted in denominations of 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 20, 25 and 50 paisa, and paper money is issued in 1, 5, 10 and 100 rupee notes.

FINANCING PRODUCTION AND TRADE

Modern methods of financing production and trade were not introduced into Nepal until the 1950's. The village moneylender was the source of credit, advancing money against gold and silver ornaments and immovable property. Most of the people, whether engaged in farming, trade, handicrafts or porter service, converted their small savings into ornaments, trinkets or jewels which could be worn by the women. Tradesmen acted as their own bankers, frequently with the aid of jobbers, wholesalers or manufacturers' representatives located in communities of northern India. Many became currency exchange operators and moneylenders. The Ranas, who derived their income from forest and mining concessions, tariffs and land taxes, bought and sold foreign currencies and kept their surpluses in jewels or in foreign investments.

Agricultural production has been financed almost entirely by farmers from their private resources and, since these are usually limited, this is one of the principal factors underlying the low level of return on the utilization of land and labor. The amount of institutional agricultural credit available is meager, and the service charges of the village moneylender, who provides most of it, are high.

The modernization and expansion of industrial production, including small, so-called cottage industries, although originally based on private investment, have been financed largely by the government with foreign aid (see ch. 19, Industry and Trade). Most traders, merchants and artisans finance their operations from their own resources, even though the Nepal Bank, Ltd., the only commercial bank, has increasingly offered facilities to merchants engaged in trade with India. Banking habits have improved but bank branches are still few. Furthermore, difficult terrain combined with lack of communications make mobilization of domestic financial resources a serious problem.

Institutions

Nepal has two banking institutions—the Nepal Rastra (central) Bank, established in 1956, and the Nepal Bank, Ltd., founded in 1937, both located in Katmandu.

The functions of the Nepal Rastra Bank include "regulating the issue of paper money, securing country-wide circulation of Nepalese currency, and achieving stability in its exchange rate" as well as mobilizing capital for economic development, stimulating trade and industry and developing the banking system. It acts as banker for the government, some foreign embassies and a few private customers but does not accept deposits from or advance loans to the public.

The Nepal Rastra Bank started functioning with a capital of NR10 million fully subscribed by the government. As of mid-1963 it had 27 branches and suboffices in addition to the headquarters office. Most of the branches are in the Tarai. In spite of transport and communications difficulties, the bank expects to open offices in more of the hill towns as trained personnel become available.

The Nepal Bank, Ltd., is a semiprivate, semigovernment organization. The government appoints three directors; the shareholders another three; and the government designates one of the six as director general. The bank is managed by a United Nations expert. When the bank was established, its business was strictly confined to advancing loans against gold, silver, jewelry and immovable property and, according to the annual report of 1962, such loans still accounted for 17 percent of total loans and advances. A steady expansion into other aspects of banking has, however, taken place over the years. The bank is now primarily engaged in financing the import and export trade with India. It rarely helps in agricultural or industrial development. It has operated at a profit almost from the beginning and, with a paid-up capital of NR2.5 million, its reserves have grown to more than NR6.6 million.

In 1962 the Nepal Bank, Ltd., had 26 branches—5 in the hill towns; the remainder in the Tarai. The deposits to cash ratio of 3 to 1 has steadily risen—an indication of the growth of the banking habit. Demand, time and savings deposits have more than quadrupled in the last decade, and in 1962 total deposits were the equivalent of about $10 million.

Credit

Despite the growth of the banking system, the lack of cheap long-term credit continues to hamper the expansion of the economy. The government has taken various steps to fill the gap. In 1959 it established the Nepal Industrial Development Corporation (NIDC), which offers medium- and long-term financial assistance to existing and new industries. Capital was provided by a loan of $1 million in Indian rupees, extended by the United States Government, and a $400,000 loan in dollars from the United States Development Loan Fund (DLF). Those who receive loans or financial assistance from the Corporation are required to contribute not less than 50 percent of the total cost of the project. Loans are advanced against the security of land, buildings, machinery and equipment for not less than 5 years and may extend up to 15 years. Rates of interest are 6½ percent per year for loans in Nepalese and Indian currencies and 7½ percent for loans in United States money. By the end of 1961, approved loans amounted to over NR9 million of which NR4 million was for the establishment of new industries and the rest for the expansion and modernization of existing ones.

The Cooperative Department, created in 1954, is carrying out credit operations in all the 14 zones and 75 districts into which the country has been divided for development purposes. By the end of 1962 there were 457 cooperatives, with a membership of 13,467, and the government had loaned them over NR2 million. The government charges the cooperatives 2 percent per year, and it advances funds to its members at 10 percent.

For over 20 years the government has been engaged in promoting cottage and village industries, but not until 1956 was provision made for extending credit on reasonable terms, and only in 1962 were regulations governing loans codified. The official Cottage, Rural and Small Industries Loan and Investment Rules define a cottage industry as any industrial enterprise having an investment of NR50,000. Provision was made for establishment of the Loan and Investment Fund for such enterprises and interest on loans was to be 6½ percent.

Government action over the last decade has resulted in only meager expansion of credit facilities. Regulations prohibit the Nepal Bank, Ltd., from lending funds for more than a year, and the Agricultural Credit Fund, established by the Nepal Rastra Bank in 1959–60, has gone unused pending policy decisions on the channeling of loans. Thus, in mid-1963 the moneylender was still the main source of credit.

Investment

Most investment is by government from public funds. Private corporate investment amounts to no more than NR40 million. The ropeway, the electricity department, the railroad and the airline are owned outright by the government, and most of the expansion in industry and public works is government-financed.

In 1958 the government announced an industrial policy, stating that private enterprise should play a major role in industrial development and reserved only the manufacture of armaments and explosives and management of public utilities for the government. Repatriation of profit and capital was guaranteed, double taxation was prescribed and provision was made for foreign interests to register firms in Nepal and to control them for an agreed period. Tax relief, tariff concessions, cheap power, land and timber, and maximum government purchases of local manufactures were also offered. In this connection, much interest attaches to the Rana fortunes, estimated to be as much as $280 million, most of it in India or in other places outside the country. The government has made unsuccessful efforts to convince the Rana family of the advantages of investing some of their funds in Nepal's economic development.

In the meantime, private investment funds are in short supply. It is probable that income from land, the major source of the country's wealth, has accumulated in the hands of a small number of landholders who are more interested in enlarging their properties and in moneylending than in other types of investment.

FINANCING GOVERNMENT

Since the overthrow of the Ranas, an expanding governmental system and various national development programs have been financed primarily by domestic taxes and foreign aid. Aid has been received from a number of countries, United Nations agencies and private foundations.

The tax system and budgetary procedures are in the process of modernization and reform. Steps have been taken to increase revenue and to improve fiscal administration. Progress has been slow but it is expected to accelerate as accurately compiled fiscal data become available and sufficient numbers of Nepalese are trained in accounting and auditing and in the operation of land revenue offices and customs posts.

Fiscal Administration

The fiscal system has been slowly evolving since 1951. From the Rana regime the government inherited land tax collection offices (*mal adda*), a few customs offices and the Audit Department of the Maharaja (Kumari Chowk), which was responsible for identifying and recovering any expenditures made by civil servants without authorization or by mistake. Records of revenue and expenditure were scattered and fragmentary and provided no indication of the country's financial resources or of the costs of government operations.

Under the new regime major fiscal responsibility was vested in the Ministry of Finance, which has increasingly modernized its structure and procedures. As of April 1963 it consisted of two Secretariats, one dealing with revenue and the other with financial control. Under the Secretariat for Revenue were the Departments of Taxation, Customs and Excise, and Land Revenue. The Department of Taxation was responsible for carrying out tax studies and making recommendations regarding new taxes and improved methods of collection. The Department of Customs and Excise administered the collection of customs and excise duties; the Land Revenue Department supervised the collection of the land tax. The Secretariat of the Financial Controller was responsible for compiling the budget and for authorizing expenditures, and within its framework were the Accounting Department and the Mint.

National Budgets

Published budgets were not inaugurated until the overthrow of the Ranas, and they have been regarded as statements of intentions rather than as provisions for a definite framework of public revenue and expenditure. Figures generally have been unreliable. Beginning in 1958, however, more accurate compilations of expenditures and revenues were prepared at government request from official sources by a United Nations expert. These studies indicate that actual revenues and expenditures have been lower than estimated and that government deficits have been less than reported.

Regular budget expenditure increased to NR103.5 million in 1961–62. The estimated budget for 1962–63 is NR140.9 million. By far the largest expenditure between 30 and 39 percent—has been on government administration, a natural result of the widening field of government activity since Rana times when administration was confined almost entirely to the maintenance of law and order and the collection of the land tax. The largest portion of administrative expenditure has been allocated to district government, the land offices and the judiciary. Military expenditure, averaging about 20 percent of the budget, is the next largest category. Expenditure on social services, including health and education, has generally been under 10 percent. Of lesser importance are expenditures in support of the Royal Household, the Trading Departments (such as the railroad) and public works.

Revenue is estimated to have risen to NR91 million in 1961–62 and to reach NR103 million in 1962–63. More than 75 percent has been received from land taxes, customs and forest concessions. Another important source is the excise duty on Indian goods, imported by Nepal, collected at Nepal's request and made over to Nepalese Government account on evidence that the goods have reached their destination in Nepal. Revenue from land taxes increased to NR28.2 million in 1961–62, averaging 30 percent of the total. Its relative position as a source of revenue has, however, been declining in favor of customs duties, which contributed 25.5 percent in 1952–53, rising to NR39 million (over 40 percent) in 1961–62. The increasing proportion of revenue from customs may be attributed largely to the growth of the trade in imports. The contribution of forest concessions averages about 10 percent of total revenue. Other sources of revenue include various taxes, fees and fines, and the receipts of the so-called Trading Departments, which operate the ropeway, the railroad, the airline and the electricity service. Until 1959–60 the issuance of coins by the Mint was entered as revenue and in some years made an important contribution to the total. Deficits have been met by the issue of currency and the use of reserve funds, not by government borrowing.

Tax Structure

Taxes are both direct and indirect. The most important direct tax is that on land. The land tax system is not uniform throughout the country but varies depending on when and where it was introduced. For tax purposes the land unit in the Katmandu Valley and the hills is the *ropani* (⅛ of an acre); in the Tarai, where holdings are larger, it is the *bigha* (1.67 acres). In general the tax is highest on paddy land and lowest on unirrigated land in the hills. In 1963 land tax in the hill districts was assessed at the rate of NR2.44 per *ropani* of paddy land and NR0.94 per *ropani* of dry land. In the Tarai the rate was set at NR15 per *bigha*. On tribal lands the land tax takes the form of a tax on house roofs at the rate of NR4 to NR13 per roof. *Guthi* land, set aside to provide income for endowments of shrines, resthouses, schools and orphanages, requires no tax. The government has extended the land tax to other tax-free holdings (*birta* land) inherited from the Rana period and is carrying out a cadastral survey in order to develop a uniform system of land taxation.

Other direct taxes include the urban property tax, the business profits tax, the salaries tax and the foreign investment tax. Assessments are low and little revenue is derived from them. An urban property tax was imposed in 1959–60, but in mid–1963 the method of assessment was still being debated. The business profits tax has presented problems, since business houses do not keep books or will not make them available to the authorities. The salaries tax has been collected from on civil servants but has not yet been extended to the small number of other salaried persons. The foreign investment tax has yielded little, since the government reportedly has had almost no success in getting people to declare their foreign holdings. The airport embarkation tax of NR5 and the hotel tax of 10 percent of the total bill apply mainly to foreigners.

Customs duty is the most important indirect tax and is imposed on almost all commodities or goods exported and imported. Books, periodicals, plants and flowers are exempt. Import duties are generally lowest on foodstuffs and necessities and highest on luxuries, varying from 5 paisa (for value of the paisa, see Glossary) per *maund* (82 pounds) of fruit and 10 paisa per *maund* of food grains to 150 percent of the value of liquor and beer shipments. Duties on exports vary from 3 paisa per dozen bananas and 4 paisa per yard of cotton textiles to NR1,500 per *maund* of raw ivory. Other indirect taxes include excise duties on matches, cigarettes, sugar, candy, liquor and cloth. There are also registration fees for deeds, gifts, mortgages and inheritance.

Development and Foreign Aid

Economic and social development, a main objective of the government since 1951, has been almost entirely financed by foreign aid. The principal donors have been the United States, India, the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. The Colombo Plan countries, various United Nations agencies and Switzerland have contributed smaller amounts (see table 13). Assistance has been allotted to specific development projects and received in cash, commodities, training facilities and technical services (see ch. 16, Character and Structure of the Economy).

In the early 1950's, Nepal's own annual contribution almost equaled foreign aid, but by 1958–59 it provided only about 29 percent of the development budget. In 1960–61, Nepal contributed about 12 percent, and in 1961-62, about 6 percent. Two development plans have been initiated: the Five-Year Plan, which began in 1956 and terminated in 1961, and the Three-Year Plan, which was started in 1962 and is to end in 1965.

The Five-Year Plan is considered to have been a qualified success. Of an announced target of NR330 million only NR214.4 million was

Table 13. Foreign Aid, Nepal 1951–63 [1]
(in thousands of Nepalese rupees) [2]

Country or Organization	Received through 1960–61	Committed 1961–62	Total 1960–62	Estimated 1962–63
United States	245,070	65,561	310,631	79,272
India	174,259	38,342	202,601	[3]25,092
People's Republic of China	32,000	3,000	35,000	5,744
Ford Foundation	28,970	1,004	29,974	1,033
Soviet Union	......	16,100	16,100	14,109
United Kingdom	160	960	1,120	5,060
New Zealand	1,126	976	2,102	900
Canada	1,120	......	1,120	......
Switzerland	2,133	......	2,133	......
World Health Organization	5,023	750	5,773	......
West Germany	......	500	500	......
Technical Assistance Board	8,603	1,650	10,253	......
International Labor Organization	......	......	......	150

[1] The fiscal year is from July 15 through July 14.

[2] For value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary.

[3] The amount shown for India for 1962–63 does not include finances for projects which are handled directly by the Indian Aid Mission to Nepal and do not pass through the government's budget. Including all such projects, which are not undertaken by the government, the total amount of aid would come to about NR50 million.

Source: Adapted from Y. P. Pant, "Development Finance in Nepal," *Eastern Economist*, XXXIX, September 7, 1962, p. 432.

spent. Some progress was made in roadbuilding, aviation and local social and public works development. Health and education in particular benefited. After dissolution of the National Assembly, the National Planning Council, with the King as chairman, developed the Three-Year Plan. It envisaged the expenditure of NR670 million over the 1962–65 period. Priority was given to the development of transport, communications, power, irrigation and agricultural extension work. Foreign aid was expected to provide NR500 million and the government at least NR100 million by "increasing taxes, mobilizing domestic savings and making public undertakings profitable."

As of mid-1963, even though foreign aid had been oversubscribed, targets were not being met but it was expected that the Three-Year Plan would be more successful than its predecessor. The King expressed confidence that the *panchayat* system, adopted throughout the country, would enlist the people in the execution of the plan and speed up the tempo of development.

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SECTION IV. NATIONAL SECURITY

CHAPTER 21

PUBLIC ORDER AND INTERNAL SECURITY

The revolt of 1950, which ended 104 years of Rana autocracy and restored the authority of the King, created a pattern of dissidence which has not disappeared. Various groups with political ambitions or local grievances have not hesitated to resort to terror and violence. Moreover, a growing number of educated young Nepalese, unable to find employment appropriate to their training, offer possible opportunities for exploitation by Communists or subversive groups. The densely populated and socially complex Katmandu Valley and parts of the Tarai especially have been subject to political disturbances, but communications and transport difficulties have helped to limit their spread. These same factors, however, have also favored the activities of subversive elements in areas remote from the capital.

Ethnic diversity is attended by relatively little friction, and a traditional respect for authority reinforced by the controls of caste and family tend to keep the incidence of serious crimes low. Judging by reports in the Nepalese press, the most frequent crimes are: theft, motivated by economic hardship; assault, arising from quarrels; and gang robbery (commonly called dacoity), which in many cases appears to be instigated by political dissidents. Punishments are not regarded as excessive by the general community and, on the whole, conform to those imposed in other South Asian countries. The death penalty has been abolished, except for treason.

A new legal code (Mulki Ain), effective on August 17, 1963, decreed everyone theoretically equal in the eyes of the law, thus ending legal discrimination based on caste, creed and sex. The code concedes the right to divorce and permits intercaste marriages involving conversions (see ch. 5, Family and Social Structure). The adoption of the code by the King's own initiative, ending centuries of feudal practices, placed the Communist leaders in a quandry; if they supported it they risked being called puppets of the regime, and if they denounced it they might be accused of favoring a return to the old order. Meanwhile, at the lower administrative levels, the judiciary and law enforcement responsibilities were in a state of transition from the system of district governors (*bada hakim*) to the village and district *panchayat* (see ch. 11, Constitution and Government). Hence, the authorities expect some time to elapse before old customs can be discarded and the new code put into practice throughout the land.

Since 1951 the police and the judical systems have been undergoing reorganization to make them uniformly effective throughout the country, a task which has been made extremely difficult by political instability and lack of communications facilities. The process has been closely observed and significantly influenced by India, which has a vital interest in the maintenance of order in Nepal. There appears to be relatively little corruption among the police. They expect and receive preferential treatment without arousing resentment, apparently because the popular attitude toward authority is still strongly rooted in the feudal past.

PUBLIC ORDER

Background

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, police and judicial functions in many areas were in the hands of local princes (rajas), who were virtually autonomous rulers of their people. Where the central government ruled outside the capital, authority was delegated to the local governors, later known as *bada hakim*, who in turn depended on village headmen and village councils to maintain order in their respective communities. The scope and intensity of police and judicial activities varied largely with local leaders and customs. Justice generally was arbitrary and punishments harsh. Caste and standing with the authorities greatly influenced court judgments and police attitudes. For certain crimes the plaintiff could summarily execute the offender. Torture by fire, water or mutilation was not abolished until 1851, after Prime Minister Sir Jang Bahadur Rana had visited England and observed judicial practices there. In 1853 he published the first codified legal text, which, with amendments, still serves as the basic law of the land.

The country's laws, civil and criminal, are based on the ancient Hindu scriptural laws (*shastra*) embodying a social code and standards of behavior. These include provisions which exempt Brahmans and women from capital punishment.

Police

Police functions in the outlying districts, because of the relative isolation of most communities, are generally limited to the maintenance of order by small detachments of the Civil Police Force supplemented by a few locally recruited policemen. Efforts by the central government to enlarge its authority over local affairs are generally regarded by the mountain peoples as encroachments on their traditional independence. Hence, old practices tend to persist in the hinterland despite changes in government and government policy at Katmandu.

Under the Rana

The Rana did not establish a nationwide police system, although Prime Minister (Maharaja) Chandra Shamsher Rana, who ruled from

1901 to 1929, partly modernized the police forces in Katmandu, other large towns, and some sections of the Tarai. In the capital, at least, applicants were admitted to the force only after completing a training course and passing an examination. Meanwhile, areas not easily accessible from Katmandu continued to be without regularly organized police forces. Villages were expected to police themselves. The militia and some army units stationed in the districts also exercised police powers, although their primary function was to guard the frontiers and protect the people from large forces of bandits, generally called dacoits, that were common, particularly in the Tarai border area.

Under the Monarchy

One result of the revolt of 1950–51 was the creation during this period of the Raksha Dal as the militant arm of the Nepali Congress party. This paramilitary body of some 5,000 men, most of whom were insurrectionists, was taken over by the new government in February 1951 and given police functions as a counterforce to the army, which had supported the Ranas during the rebellion. By the beginning of 1952, approximately 23,500 men were engaged in police functions. They were divided into 5 distinct organizations: the Civil Police, 2,000; the Raksha Dal, 5,000; the Katmandu police force (Randal), 500; the militia, 15,000; and military detachments assigned to police duties, 1,000. As a step toward attaining a centralized police system, the government, in May 1952, attempted to merge the Randal into the Raksha Dal, but most of the Randal opposed the merger and some 200 resigned rather than accept their new status. In theory, the Minister of Home Affairs had authority over all police forces in the country; actually he had little control over the militia and the military units on police duties.

A series of events between 1952 and 1954 revealed the need for basic reforms in the police system. In January 1952 many members of the Raksha Dal, generally regarded as dependable government supporters, defected and participated in the uprising led by Kunwar Indrajit Singh in protest against the presence of Ranas in the Cabinet (see ch. 12, Political Dynamics). About a year later the entire police system was badly shaken by the allegation that a number of top police officials were plotting to overthrow the government. More than 80 police officials were arrested, the Inspector General of Police resigned, and the Deputy Inspector General was suspended.

Meanwhile, complaints that the police forces were ineffective came from many districts and from various political party leaders. In June 1953 troops had to be rushed from Katmandu to various sections of the Tarai to aid the police in quelling disturbances among the farmers carrying on a campaign launched by the Nepali Congress party against the payment of rent (see ch. 12, Political Dynamics).

In 1952 the government acted to modernize the police system and improve its effectiveness. Assistance from India was requested and an Indian police official was sent to Katmandu to help with the reorganization. Some Nepalese policemen were sent to the Indian police training school at Moradabad, near New Delhi, for training to supplement the instruction given at the Nepalese police training school which had been set up on the Indian model in July 1951 at Bhimphedi, 15 miles southwest of Katmandu. In May 1954 the Minister of Home Affairs, Tanka Prasad Acharya, announced a plan for sweeping changes in the police system. Under the plan the five groups then performing police functions were to be replaced by a single group under the control of the central government. The police force was to be reduced in size but improved in efficiency. The militia was to be disbanded and reorganized as a "road army" to aid in the road construction program. Military detachments doing police duties were to be returned to military functions. The Civil Police, Raksha Dal and Randal forces were to be merged into a single force of about 6,500 men and officers. The new force was to receive increased pay and allowances.

The Minister's plans were obstructed, however, by intra-Cabinet disputes in the Matrika Prasad Koirala government (see ch. 12, Political Dynamics). Nevertheless, King Mahendra, on October 13, 1955, promulgated the Nepal Police Act, the provisions of which followed the general outline of the original plan. Besides defining police duties and functions, the Act effected a general reduction in the size of the police force and a complete reorganization of its administrative structure.

In accordance with the Act the country is for police purposes divided into three zones (frequently called ranges by English-speaking Nepalese): eastern, central and western, with headquarters at Biratnagar (Eastern Tarai), Katmandu (Katmandu Valley) and Nepalganj (Far Western Tarai), respectively. Each zonal headquarters, under a deputy inspector general of police, is responsible for several subsections composed of 4 or 5 police districts operating under a superintendent of police. A district superintendent is in charge of the police stations in his area. Each station normally is supervised by a head constable. He is in charge of several constables who perform the basic police functions—crime investigations and arrests. Each constable customarily is responsible for 3 or 4 villages. As of 1963, the system includes: 21 police district inspectors (1 at each police district headquarters); guards for 32 *bada hakim* offices and for 43 tax collection (revenue) offices; and personnel for 291 outposts. The Central Police Headquarters, under the Inspector General of the Nepal Police Force in the Ministry of Home Affairs, is provided with: a criminal investigation division, equipped with photographic and fingerprinting equipment; intelligence, counterespionage, motor transport and radio sections; a traffic police company; a central training center; and a band.

Courts

The judicial system under the Rana, despite some reform measures, remained traditional in character. The code introduced by the first Rana Prime Minister, Sir Jang Bahadur Rana (in office from 1846 to 1877), combined ancient Hindu sanctions with rules of behavior which had evolved over the centuries among the Newari in the Katmandu Valley. Under this vague instrument, magistrates and justices had wide latitude in deciding cases according to their own interpretations. There was a motive for caution, however, in the provision that if a higher court reversed the decision of a lower court, the magistrate of the lower court was liable to fine, corporal punishment or even execution. Court procedures varied greatly. The accuser was placed in jail along with the accused. Writs of habeas corpus were not issued. Prisoners often waited many months before trial, and the onus of proof of innocence rested on the accused, who was tried without a jury. Under the rules, no man could be convicted of a criminal charge without a confession, but confessions were commonly extracted by torture.

The Rana courts had both executive and judicial powers, and the Prime Minister himself was the supreme judicial authority. He could call any case from any court and dispose of it as he saw fit; his decision was final.

The court of appeal (*bharadari*) sat in two groups. Each group consisted of eight or more judges presided over by one of the near relatives of the Maharaja. The *bharadari* court was assisted by four administrative sections, each headed by an official (*hakim*), whose principal duty was to prepare and present the cases before one of the two groups of judges.

Appeals from the *bharadari* court to the Maharaja were first reviewed by a judicial body called the *niksari* court, which consisted of several judges drawn from among lawyers or public servants, such as principality chiefs and army generals. The most important cases were not dealt with by this court but were sent directly to the Maharaja.

The court system was reorganized between 1905 and 1930 by Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher Rana. He established two major courts of appeal in Katmandu—the *diwani* court for civil cases and the *fuzdari* court for all criminal cases except those which military courts (*sadar jangi kotwali*) and police courts (*thana*) were empowered to handle. The police courts, executing the direct orders of the Maharaja, were also empowered to handle certain civil cases, including those involving attempts to convert Nepalese to Christianity or any other foreign religion. In addition to these courts, a special appellate body, called the *amini goswara* court sat in Katmandu to hear appeals from certain courts in the Tarai controlled by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Tarai and the Mountain Regions had virtually separate court systems. Fifty provincial courts were authorized to hear both civil and criminal cases: 28, called *adalat* courts, were in the Mountain Regions; and 22, called *amini* courts, were in the Tarai. The Mountain Region also had 18 additional courts composed of senior military officers. It was the responsibility of these courts to see that justice was expedited in the *adalat* courts, and they also served as courts of first appeal. In the Tarai there were 9 similar courts and 1 court of first appeal; they were presided over by *bada hakim* instead of military officers.

New reforms were contained in the Constitutional Act of 1948, which went into effect in 1950, just before the insurrection which ousted its Rana authors from power. The primary purposes of the Act were to integrate the lower courts with the new *panchayat* system which was to be developed and to free all courts from the control of the executive (see ch. 11, Constitution and Government).

Outstanding features of the proposed reforms were: administration of elementary civil and criminal justice by the village *panchayat;* trial by judges in public courts, including courts of first instance and courts of appeal; establishment of a Supreme Court (*pradhan nyayalya*) consisting of a Chief Justice and a maximum of 12 other judges appointed by the Maharaja; and provisions for the dismissal of judges only by the Maharaja on request from the legislature, based on proved misbehavior or incapacity.

The end of the Rana rule in 1951 prevented the application of the Constitutional Act. Its influence, however, was reflected in subsequent developments. The repeated emphasis on judicial reform in the published programs of successive governments since 1951 suggests that this objective has not been satisfactorily attained. Some progress has been made, however. The Prime Minister has been divested of his judicial powers, and he no longer functions as the highest court of appeal. The Supreme Court Act of 1952 established this court as the highest judicial body in the country, with powers and structure corresponding generally to those of the Supreme Court in India. At this level only have judicial and executive functions been completely separated.

Under the *panchayat* law of 1952, jurisdiction over petty crimes in the outlying areas was vested in the village *panchayats,* which took over this responsibility from the headmen or village councils, whichever happened to preside. In 1957, however, the village headmen and councils, traditionally vested with a high degree of autonomy, were again entrusted with keeping peace and order and the *panchayats* were officially relieved of their judicial functions, which they seem to have performed well in most instances. The change may have been made because the isolation of many villages, particularly those in western Nepal, made it difficult to maintain adequate liaison between the *panchayat* and the central authorities. A month or more is required for couriers to reach the western districts from Katmandu, and radio communications are not yet installed in all areas. Hence, information regarding new laws and directives is generally lacking.

As early as 1953 the government began sending traveling courts into the districts. Initially concerned mainly with land disputes, they apparently acquired additional functions. In 1959 several of these courts, popularly called touring commissions, each consisting of two justices appointed by the King, were inspecting various district courts. In addition, they reportedly handled almost 700 cases during the year and reviewed hundreds of appeals and police reports. By 1963 they were empowered to audit public accounts, hear complaints of all kinds, make arrests, hold trials and impose sentences.

The application of reform measures inevitably encountered obstacles. In 1953, for example, the Supreme Court, in exercising its newly granted independence, affirmed its right to issue writs of habeas corpus and ruled that the government had no right to imprison persons under the Public Safety Act (1952), which authorized imprisonment without trial for offenses against the state. The King then moved to reduce the powers of the judiciary. In February 1954 he issued a proclamation which declared in substance that the ultimate judicial authority rested in the Crown. The proclamation also deprived the Supreme Court of the right to issue writs of habeas corpus in certain types of cases. After a public outcry against this curtailment of judicial authority, the government relented, and in at least one instance honored the Court's action in issuing a writ for the release of a person imprisoned under the Public Safety Act. In 1955 King Mahendra proclaimed the Supreme Court the highest court of appeal in the land. Appeals became numerous, every appeals court was overworked, backlogs developed and cases were not heard for many months after they were presented.

An important step toward a unified judicial system came in 1956 with the establishment, mostly in the Tarai, of a series of district courts to hear civil and criminal cases. Appeals courts were set up in Katmandu. All were headed by the Supreme Court. In December 1959 further judicial developments included a proclamation by the King authorizing district courts to handle original cases of all kinds within their respective areas and any cases sent to them by the Supreme Court. The proclamation also prescribed the establishment of at least three so-called high courts, one in Katmandu Valley, one in eastern Nepal at Ilam, and the other in western Nepal at Napalganj. These courts, each composed of one chief judge, a maximum of two other judges and additional judges as required, were to handle appeals against the decisions of district judges. Appeals could be made in cases involving a fine of NR2,000 (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary) or more, or NR1,000 and a prison sentence of 1 year or more, or those involving especially complicated legal questions. Appeals from a high court to the Supreme Court could be made in cases involving complicated legal questions, in interpretation of the Constitution, and in sentences imposing capital punishment or imprisonment for more than 5 years and a fine of NR5,000 or more.

After the King took over direct control of the government in 1960, he pressed for modernization of the court system. By April 1961 he had proclaimed several important reforms. For the first time public prosecutors were attached to each of the high courts, and prosecutors as well as defense advocates were made available to the district courts. He also abolished the Rana practice of requiring the accuser to go to jail along with the accused, pending trial. After a general reorganization of the judicial structure in November 1961, the three high courts were discontinued in December, and their nine judges were attached to the Supreme Court as additional judges for assignment to traveling courts as needed.

The Constitution of 1962 stipulates that the King shall appoint the Chief Justice after consulting with members of the Council of State, and that he shall appoint other judges after consulting with the Chief Justice. Requirements for appointment include a minimum of 5 years' experience as a district judge or an equivalent judicial post and a minimum of 7 years' experience as a government or private pleader. The judges may remain in office until they have reached 65 years of age.

The Supreme Court may award punishment prescribed by law "in respect to contempt of itself or its subordinate courts." It also is empowered to issue orders and directives, including writs of habeas corpus and mandamus, and injunctions for ensuring the exercise of the fundamental rights granted under Article 3 of the Constitution (see ch. 11, Constitution and Government).

By June 1963 the court system was headed by the Supreme Court, composed of a Chief Justice and 9 judges (4 principal judges and 5 additional judges) and a small secretarial staff. There were 11 district courts and 62 subdistrict courts, commonly called regional courts. The Attorney General (chief public prosecutor) was assisted by 3 government advocates, and each district and regional court was provided with public prosecutors and defense advocates.

The large backlog of cases in 1955 apparently had been virtually eliminated by April 1963, when the King retired 5 Supreme Court judges, reportedly because they lacked sufficient work. Despite reform and reorganization, many weaknesses remain to be overcome. Some cases in 1963 were still being tried by improvised special courts. Some decisions still appeared to be influenced by caste and the standing of the involved parties with the King and the government officials. Regulations for uniform legal and court procedures were lacking. Areas of jurisdiction between the various courts were vaguely defined. In some places—as in the Jumla and Mustang Districts—judicial powers were still exercised by courts administered by local rajas (*rajyaia*), whose hereditary authority is a vestige of the feudal past (see ch. 2, Historical Setting).

Crimes and Punishments

Treason and other major offenses against the state are regarded as the most serious crimes. Less serious, but listed under the State Case Act of 1961 as offenses requiring primary investigations by the state itself, are: crimes against the throne or members of the royal family, misappropriation of public funds, destruction of public property, forgery of official seals, counterfeiting, attempting to convert Hindus to Christianity or any other foreign religion, propagation of atheism, murder, rape, dacoity, arson, cow slaughter and gambling.

The death sentence may be imposed only for treason. Punishment for other crimes appears to be limited to imprisonment and fines. The severity of punishment depends on the seriousness of the crime, the degree of culpability and any mitigating circumstances. This is illustrated by the sentences imposed in April 1963 by a tribunal in Katmandu upon 17 persons convicted of attempting to dynamite a number of public buildings. All received prison sentences: 8 for life and 9 for periods ranging from 6 months to 5 years, and fines ranging up to NR5,000. In February 1963 a junior official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was sentenced to 6 months in prison and fined NR500 for forging official documents; 2 of his colleagues were fined NR1,000 each for their part in the offense.

After taking control in 1960 the King promulgated several laws prohibiting activities prejudicial to national unity. The Public Security Act of August 1961, for example, authorized the detention of violators for a maximum period of 3 years without trial. The Act further stipulated that its provisions could not be questioned in any court of law. Furthermore, the law prohibiting political activities, passed in April 1963, stated that violators would incur a maximum penalty of 3 years' imprisonment, a fine of NR1,500, or both.

The Penal System

State-supported penal institutions include the central prison at Katmandu and a jail at most of the district capitals. All are administered by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Prisoners seem to be well cared for and many are employed on various public works projects.

Jail reform measures, announced in July 1963, apply particularly to the central prison at Katmandu, where the facilities presumably are better than elsewhere. The principal reforms include arrangements for medical treatment and for enlargement and modernization of the cells, provision for indoor and outdoor recreation and permission to dine with relatives during festivals and to see visitors at specified hours on certain days. In addition, the Cottage Industries Department was directed to supervise the operation of workshops in which prisoners are to be trained to make cotton and woolen cloth, hosiery, baskets, mats and aluminum utensils. Because of limited capacity, only about 100 out of the 1,200 prisoners can be accommodated in the workshops. The reforms lack provisions for photographic files or for record-maintenance systems.

INTERNAL SECURITY

The authorities have successfully dealt with the challenges of various dissident groups; but in two notable instances—in 1955 and again in 1960—the threat to the state has appeared so serious that the monarch has felt it necessary to assume direct control of the government. On three occasions India, upon request, has sent forces to help restore civil order.

Meanwhile, all politically articulate Nepalese elements, except the Communists, have been concerned that continuing agitation and acts of violence might jeopardize the country's sovereignty by providing an occasion for intervention by the Chinese Communists. Consciousness of the threat heightened with Chinese aggression against India in 1962, and as of the end of 1963, Nepal had enjoyed more than a year without major civil disturbances.

The government appears to be in firm control of the country and capable of coping successfully in the foreseeable future with either subversion from the outside or threats to internal security generated domestically. Potentially subversive groups lack organization and effective leadership, and King Mahendra is vigorously moving ahead with the establishment of the *panchayat* system. The government is actively indoctrinating the people in the *panchayat* concept and attempting to improve administrative channels between Katmandu and the outlying districts. Governmental representatives are visiting various parts of the country, talking to regional officials and villagers, listening to their grievances and, where possible, taking authorized remedial action on the spot.

Background

Nepalese history is replete with incidents of intrigue, conspiracy and violence perpetrated in the fierce competition both within the ruling families and among the rulers of the small principalities into which the country was long divided. After control of the central government passed from the kings of the Shah dynasty in 1846 to the hereditary prime ministers of the Rana family, a series of sanguinary episodes marked the conspiratorial efforts of various groups to restore effective power to the monarch or to seize power themselves (see ch. 2, Historical Setting; ch. 12, Political Dynamics).

Early in the twentieth century, with increasing numbers of Nepalese youths returning from service in India and elsewhere with British Gurkha military units, a growing national consciousness became apparent. Educated Nepalese, outside the ruling class, tended to blame the Ranas for the country's backwardness and for its enforced isolation. By 1935 a group of five young dissidents secretly formed the People's Party (Praja Parishad), which sought to restore the King to power. The party virtually disintegrated in 1940 when most of its leadership was either imprisoned or executed for alleged participation in an anti-Rana conspiracy. Despite repression, anti-Rana agitation increased, and it was stimulated by the independence movement in India. The Nepali National Congress, formed in January 1946 in Banaras (India), also was dedicated to replacing Rana autocracy with a constitutional monarchy. In 1948 a member of the royal family and some disgruntled Class "C" Ranas combined to form the Nepali Democratic Congress. It merged with the Nepali National Congress in March 1950 to form the Nepali Congress, which had the political and financial backing of Subarna Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana—one of the few Class "A" Rana who supported the King. In effect, the Congress was a consolidation of forces seeking to overthrow the Rana regime (see ch. 5, Family and Social Structure; ch. 12, Political Dynamics).

The new party became increasingly militant and immediately came under suspicion when the press, in September 1950, reported another plot, allegedly to murder the Prime Minister, Mohan Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, the Commander in Chief of the Army and other prominent Ranas in Katmandu. The Congress leaders denied that they were involved in such a plot, but they did reveal plans to organize an armed force. With this they intended to capture a district (apparently Palpa, some 75 miles west of Katmandu), help the King escape from Rana control, and assist him in setting up a government in the captured area.

When the Chinese Communists moved into Tibet in October 1950, India gravely concerned about the deteriorating security situation in Nepal, decided to aid the anti-Rana elements. On November 6, King Tribhuvan was given refuge at the residence of the Indian Ambassador in Katmandu. The Rana authorities, noting India's firm opposition and the demonstrations in the streets in support of the King, stopped threatening to remove the King forcibly to the palace. Despite police surveillance the royal family was able to escape to India in two Indian planes.

Meanwhile, the situation was developing into a full-scale insurrection. Early in November 1950 the rebel forces, under Nepali Congress leadership, captured Birganj, the most convenient crossing point into India south of Katmandu Valley. By November 13 they had moved north some 30 miles to Amlekhganj, where they met resistance from Rana government units which forced them back to the Birganj area. A week later government troops were in Birganj, and the Congress forces presumably had infiltrated into India or had disappeared into the town.

West of Birganj the Congress elements, under K. I. Singh, gained control of Butwal, in the border district of Bhairawa. Singh claimed he could have captured the entire district if Congress leaders had provided him with arms and ammunition. Meanwhile, leaders of the semiautonomous Kiranti proclaimed the establishment of an independent republic in the northeastern part of the country (see ch. 2, Historical Setting; ch. 4, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

In addition to armed opposition in remote areas, hostile demonstrations in Katmandu Valley, Indian support of the insurgents and British aloofness, the Rana regime was confronted with internal disagreements. Some of the young, liberal Rana began to favor an Indian proposal for a constitutional monarchy. Debate on the proposal was abruptly ended by renewed military action. By December 18 the rebels had captured Bhojpur, Khotang, Dingla and the industrial town of Biratnagar, all in eastern Nepal. In western Nepal the towns of Chainpur, Kailali, Kanchanpur and others were in their hands.

Faced with these developments and handicapped by inability to move troops from eastern to western Nepal without passing through India, on January 7, 1951, the regime accepted the compromise settlement for a constitutional monarchy which had been proposed by India. By the end of the month the settlement was accepted also by all Nepali Congress leaders except K. I. Singh and a few of his followers in the Bhairawa District of Western Tarai. They refused to lay down their arms, rejecting any compromise with the Rana regime. The end of Rana rule finally came on February 15, 1951, when the King returned to Katmandu as head of state, and preparations began for an elected constituent assembly and for the appointment of a Rana-Nepali Congress interim Cabinet (see ch. 12, Political Dynamics).

The new government soon became the target of insurgent forces. In western Nepal, K. I. Singh, with some 300 of his followers, refused to recognize the King's authority. In May 1951 he and about 100 of his men, including some members of the newly formed Communist Party of Nepal, were jailed in Bhairawa by the Nepalese authorities assisted by Indian forces. Singh escaped in July but was soon rearrested and imprisoned in the Singha Durbar in Katmandu.

Meanwhile, some of the Ranas, still hoping to regain power, formed the Gorkha Dal party. They were joined by a sizable number of army officers and, after making exaggerated claims regarding their strength, they demanded representation in the Cabinet. The Minister of Home Affairs, B. P. Koirala, charged that the party was inciting anarchy in the country and, on April 9, 1951, he imprisoned its president and secretary general. Gorkha Dal partisans stormed the prison, released the two leaders and gathered threateningly at the home of the Minister, whose guards fired into the crowd, killing two persons and wounding many others. The party was banned on April 15, and the next day the King, determined to eliminate Rana influence from the army, dismissed some 30 officers for complicity in the disorders. Despite this setback the Gorkha Dal leaders by late 1951 had formed the Gorkha Parishad (Gurkha Party), with branches established in various parts of the country, but they did not thereafter disturb the peace.

Violence flared up again on November 6, 1951, when police fired on a procession of students in Katmandu. Incited by Communist Party agitators, the students then demanded the immediate dismissal of the Inspector General of Police. The Prime Minister's criticism of the police action embarrassed the Minister of Home Affairs, who, in support of the police, contended that the demonstrators drew fire only after they attempted to disarm the guards at police headquarters. The incidents precipitated a government crisis, and within a few days the Nepali Congress party ministers and the Prime Minister resigned.

By the autumn of 1951 many of the former insurrectionists in the paramilitary Raksha Dal were becoming disgruntled because members of the Rana family still held key government posts. In western Nepal disaffected elements tended to join the K. I. Singh partisans, who were still resisting the authorities and continuing the anti-Rana struggle in the Bhairawa area. In eastern Nepal many came under the influence of the newly formed State Senate (Rashtriya Mahasabha), a group which pressed for the independence of the Kiranti, who claimed that they were not under the jurisdiction of the new government.

Early in January 1952 the top leaders of the dissident groups, along with K. I. Singh, were under guard in the Singha Durbar in Katmandu. They were, however, able to maintain contact with confederates on the outside. On January 22, about 1,200 Raksha Dal men, acting under Singh's directions, attempted a coup d'etat. They stormed the Singha Durbar, released Singh and 2 leaders of the Kiranti separatist movement, seized the arsenal and the airport and cut telephone communications with India. The army, remaining loyal to the King, quelled the revolt within 24 hours. But Singh, with about 30 of his followers, escaped to Lhasa, Tibet, and later they went on to Peiping. On January 23 the King declared a state of emergency, imposed a curfew and banned political meetings and demonstrations. On January 25 he outlawed the Communist Party and on January 27, the State Senate. Later in the year the Raksha Dal was disbanded, and some of its trusted members were accepted in the police force.

Government Policy

No general definition of subversion has been written into law, but Article 9 of the Constitution of December 16, 1962, prescribes that the principal duty of every citizen is to be faithful to the nation and loyal to the State. Article 7 stipulates that, in the interest of the public good, laws and regulations may be enacted to restrict or control the exercise of fundamental rights. In addition, laws may be enacted to prevent attempts to "subvert this Constitution or any law in force for the time being or any other acts of subversion."

By the end of 1963 the King and the National Panchayat had promulgated numerous acts and decrees which prescribed punishments for any antinational and antisocial activities likely to endanger the peace and tranquility of the country by inciting hatred against the government or any particular group or community.

The leaders of the government are prone to assume that all opposition is potentially subversive in intent. Probably coupled with this official attitude is a tendency among the people generally to attach no particular stigma to the person accused or convicted of subversive acts.

Communist Activity

The Communist Party of Nepal was formed in West Bengal, India, in September 1949 by Nepalese members of the Communist Party of India. There is evidence that some of these members, including Man Mohan Adhikari and Pushpa Lal, were involved in the strike of the Biratnagar Jute Mill workers in 1947. Both men continue to be prominent Party leaders (see ch. 18, Labor).

The Party, since its formation, has been handicapped by factionalism and an apparent lack of aggressive leadership. Moreover, governmental proscription has forced it to operate underground for more than half of its existence—from January 1952 to April 1956, for alleged complicity in the abortive coup led by K. I. Singh, and since January 1961, when the King banned all political parties.

Initially, the Party seemed to have acquired considerable influence, especially among students in Katmandu, jute mill workers in Biratnagar and landless peasants in the Tarai. By early 1950 some radical elements in the Nepali National Congress reportedly had switched to the Communist Party, and some Party members had infiltrated into the National Congress (see ch. 12, Political Dynamics).

Meanwhile, the Party benefited from favorable propaganda based on Communist successes in China and Tibet. Many Nepalese mountain people with social and religious ties in Tibet appear to have been favorably impressed by the reports of new roads, schools and hospitals in nearby Tibetan towns. These impressions were soon offset, however, when their Tibetan neighbors began to flee from Chinese Communist repressions in the occupied areas.

During the anti-Rana rebellion of 1950-51, Communists were particularly active in Bhairawa District in the Western Tarai, where the Nepali Congress forces, commanded by K. I. Singh, were also engaged. Both groups, operating separately, but for the same objectives, refused to recognize the cease-fire agreement negotiated by leaders of the Nepali Congress and of the government. The dissidents were suppressed only after Nepalese troops aided by Indian Army units from Bihar had been brought against them.

The Communists were among the more active of some 35 political groups competing for power in 1951 after the overthrow of the Rana. They attempted to associate themselves with the predominant Nepali Congress and urged it to press for objectives which would, in effect, turn the anti-Rana movement into a mass struggle for land and social reforms on the Communist model. Late in 1951 the Communists joined with the People's Party to form the United Front, which opposed any compromise with Rana elements. Disgruntled by its failure to receive any representation on the 45-member consultative council appointed by the King in October 1951, the Front soon broke up.

The Communists then turned to Singh, supporting his effort to overthrow the government by force in January 1952. Although banned because of their complicity in this venture, the Party continued to pursue its objectives through various front organizations, such as the Kisan Sangh (Peasant Association), the Mahila Sangh (Women's Association), the Jan Adhikar Suraksha Samiti (People's Rights Protection Committee), the All-Nepalese Students' Federation, the Nepalese Peace Committee and some trade union groups. Government controls were lax, and the Communists were actually dominant in some of the remote mountainous areas where governmental authority was not yet fully established.

The Party was also active in the Jhapa area on the Indian border in the southeastern Tarai, where it stimulated a wave of lawlessness in April and May 1952. The instrument employed appears to have been the Kisan Sabha (Peasant Assembly), a Communist-dominated Indian pressure group exploiting peasant grievances. In August 1952 guerrillas attempted to capture Jumla, a district capital near the Tibetan border in northwestern Nepal. In July 1953, Communist-inspired peasant uprisings in the southwestern Tarai were quelled with the aid of Indian troops. In support of the anti-Indian feeling—which in 1953–54 was fostered by the Nepali Congress—the Communists and the Gurkha Party led demonstrations in May 1954 against the visiting Indian parliamentary delegation to Katmandu. In August 1954 the People's Rights Protection Committee sponsored public mass meetings in Katmandu, denouncing "American imperialist activities."

During this period, Communists, through the front organizations, pressed for radical land reforms calling for elimination of the wealthy landowning class and redistribution of land among tenants and landless peasants. In foreign affairs, emphasis was mainly on "peace" propaganda, "non-alignment" with any bloc, denouncement of "imperialist war mongers," and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China. The Party seemed to be split into two factions over India, one favoring and the other opposing friendship and cooperation. The anti-Indian faction, denouncing the Indo-Nepal treaty of 1950 as a violation of Nepal's sovereignty, demanded the withdrawal of the Indian military mission and the removal of Indian personnel from border check posts (see ch. 22, The Armed Forces).

The ban imposed on the Party by the government in January 1952 was lifted on April 16, 1956, after the Party's underground leader, Man Mohan Adhikari, defiantly notified the government that the Communists intended to come out into the open on that date. The government's decision was announced following written assurances from Communists leaders that their policies would be pursued within the limits of the constitutional monarchy. The legalized Party sought but failed to get representation in the successive governments, even that of K. I. Singh, who had returned from Communist China in September 1955 with the public acclaim of a national hero and had drawn some prominent Communists into his newly formed United Democratic Party. Resentful over their lack of representation in the government, the Communists strongly denounced the presence in the Cabinet of "independents" acting as "agents of the feudal hierarchy." The Second Party Congress, held in June 1957, endorsed the Party's existing programs and policies, placing special emphasis on abrogation of the treaties with India and Great Britain which authorized the recruitment of Nepalese for Gurkha regiments (see ch. 12, Political Dynamics).

In the parliamentary elections of February-April 1959, only 48 out of about 850 candidates were Communists and only 4 of the Communists were successful, as compared to 74 for the leading Nepali Congress party. The Party's Secretary General, Keshar Jang Raimajhi, running in the Palpa District, was defeated. In an apparent reaction to this poor showing the Party's Central Committee, in September 1960, recommended an extensive revision of the Party's organization and prepared an elaborate political program aimed at the establishment of a "peoples democracy" under the existing parliamentary system. It was stipulated, however, that "mass movements" and agitations would be continued regardless of legal processes. Named as the principal targets were domestic "feudalists" and foreign "imperialists led by the United States." Immediate objectives included stoppage of Gurkha recruitment by the British Army and closure of British recruitment depots in Nepal; withdrawal of United States technicians and experts and their replacement by Asians; and prohibition of United States private investments in Nepal. Significantly, the Central Committee's position regarding the monarchy and its attitude toward the ideological dispute between the Soviet Union and Communist China was not announced.

Meanwhile, the Communists received moral support from the Soviet Embassy, which opened in Katmandu in October 1959, and from the People's Republic of China Embassy, which opened in July 1950. Soviet and Chinese Communist friendship associations were organized under the sponsorship of the respective embassies, and technicians and specialists from both of these countries arrived to assist in organizational and propaganda activities (see ch. 13, Foreign Relations; ch. 14, Public Information).

Although the Communists were not openly involved in the revolt of October 25, 1960, in the Gurkha District, their activities, along with those of other opposition groups, were hampered by the King's action on December 15, 1960, banning all political activity. Although most of the top leaders of other political groups were imprisoned or were able to escape to India on that date, the government succeeded in arresting three prominent Communists: Man Mohan Adhikari, from Biratnagar; Tulsilal Amatya, a member of Parliament; and Pushpa Lal, a member of the Central Committee. The rest, including Secretary General Keshar Jang Raimajhi, reportedly went into hiding in Nepal.

Some of those imprisoned were released within a few days but surveillance apparently was lax. Press accounts indicate that the Communist Party's Central Committee met early in May 1961 in the state of Bihar, India. At this meeting, Secretary General Raimajhi reportedly contended that the Party should support King Mahendra's leadership. He resigned from his post after a clash with the Party's left-wing faction on this issue and returned to Katmandu.

Raimajhi, arrested on July 9, was released from prison in mid-August but was restricted to Katmandu Valley. Meanwhile, in their first determined effort against the Communists, the police had arrested 11 persons involved in the distribution of Communist posters and leaflets in Katmandu Valley. In May 1962, Tulsilal Amatya, as Secretary General, announced in a press conference at Banaras, India, that the Third Party Congress had recently been held and that the new Party program envisaged a united front of "all political parties and revolutionary forces against the King's dictatorial regime."

This program appears to be still in effect as of late 1963. The Party, adjusting to its illegal status, attempts to carry out its policies and programs through members working individually in organizations that have not been banned or in support of opposition groups in exile, such as the Nepali Congress. Such tactics enable it to exploit vulnerabilities in a time of crisis, and it possibly could emerge as a dominant political force.

Estimates of the total Party membership vary widely, from 3,000 to 8,000. Strength appears to center in pockets scattered throughout the country, particularly in Biratnagar District (Eastern Tarai) and Palpa District (southwest of Katmandu), in certain localities along the boundary with Tibet, and among the Kiranti in the Eastern Mountain Region. Substantial support reportedly is found among the Newari merchants, artisans, educators, students and the lowest castes in Katmandu and Katmandu Valley.

The Party's greatest weakness seems to be factionalism, which has damaged the effectiveness of its leadership and handicapped its organizational efforts. Published accounts indicate the existence of two main factions. One, led by Secretary General Tulsilal Amatya (in exile in India), favors the revolutionary approach to power through cooperation with any group, regardless of orientation, and is willing to help overthrow the monarchial system. The other, led by Raimajhi, seeks the same objective by giving temporary tactical support to the King and to the monarchial system. Despite its factional strife, the Party is a force to be reckoned with in the country's political life, although as of 1963 it seems incapable of offering any immediate threat to overthrow the government.

Other Groups

Exiles

In December 1960, when the King took direct control of the government, many members of the dissolved Parliament fled to India. In exile, they and other dissidents, under the leadership of General Subarna Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana, a prominent figure in the outlawed Nepali Congress party and former Deputy Prime Minister (1959–60), have organized a strong opposition movement. The movement has both resorted to violence against government forces and—in connection with resolutions in January 1961 demanding that the King reconvene Parliament and release political prisoners—launched a passive resistance campaign.

The government's offer in July 1961 of amnesty to all politicians sought by the police since December 1950 was met by the opposition forces with violence. Armed raiding parties based in India began to make incursions across the border. By the end of 1961 these sporadic forays were supplemented by guerrilla activity in various parts of the country. Early in January 1962, General Subarna Shamsher reportedly asserted in Patna, India, that the resistance movement against the monarchy was being intensified, that some 20 police posts had been seized, that guerrillas had captured arms and ammunition from government storehouses, and that sabotage was taking place throughout the country. In August 1962 a rebel radio station reportedly began to operate near Darjeeling.

By the autumn of 1962, however, the tempo of guerrilla activity seemed to be subsiding as the effectiveness of government security forces improved. Meanwhile, resentment was growing in Nepalese official circles against India for permitting the exiles to organize and train armed groups for raiding expeditions into Nepal. A relaxation of tension came in November 1962 with an announcement in Calcutta by General Subarna Shamsher that because of the Chinese Communist threat the Nepali Congress leaders had decided to suspend temporarily their activities against the government. Indian pressure and the decreasing rewards of guerrilla operations undoubtedly also influenced the decision. Despite its continued quiescence in 1963, there was nothing to indicate that the leadership of the exiled opposition had relinquished its aim of returning to power in Nepal.

Tibetan Refugees

After the revolt in Tibet in 1959 against the Chinese Communists, some 10,000 Tibetans (including an estimated 6,000 who had fought against the Chinese) fled to Nepal. Some of these refugees have since moved to India, but many, possibly about 7,000, still remain in the country, particularly along the northern border. They constitute a major welfare problem, and the government, in cooperation with the International Red Cross, has concentrated them in settlements of approximately 500 persons each in widely separated areas. The largest groups are around Jumla, Mustang and Pokhara in the Western Mountain Region; in the Khumbu Valley and around Namche Bazar and Okhaldhunga in the Eastern Mountain Region; and in the Bhairawa District of the Western Tarai. A few are in the Katmandu Valley. These concentrations have contributed to grain shortages and rising food prices in some areas—in 1962 around Pokhara and Okhaldhunga especially.

Except in the field of public welfare, the refugees, as of the end of 1963, pose no serious problem for the military and internal security forces. Communist agents reportedly have infiltrated into the settlements, and the potentialities for their exploitation by Nepalese or Chinese Communists are recognized by the authorities. This threat could become serious in a deteriorating situation caused by hostile activities of Nepalese political exile groups from their Indian bases in the south. There is also the danger that at some point the presence of Tibetan refugees might be used by the Chinese Communists as a pretext for a military invasion of Nepal.

Miscellaneous

Other groups offering possible opportunities for exploitation by Communist or other subversive elements include about 4,000 young men, some of them army officers, educated and trained outside the country, who are impatient with the pace of social and economic change in Nepal. About 3,000 of these are unemployed and are frustrated by lack of opportunity to apply their acquired skills. Others include a sizable group of former members of the ruling class, resentful over the loss of wealth, power and prestige; and about 5,000 landless people, most of whom have come down from areas of land scarcity in the mountains and live illegally in improvised shelters in forest reservations of the Tarai.

CHAPTER 22

THE ARMED FORCES

Nepal is famous for its fighting men. In the two world wars they played a role out of all proportion to the country's size and resources. Numerous ethnic groups living in the mountains are justly proud of their warrior traditions, and as the need for military service arises they willingly respond to the call. Conscription has never been necessary. In quality the country's manpower ranks among the best in the world. The ingenuity, self-reliance, cheerful acceptance of discipline and adaptability of the average recruit tend to offset his generally low level of education.

The worldwide reputation of the Nepalese soldier as a superior fighting man is due mainly to the qualities of the troops of Nepalese origin who have fought as contingents in the British Army since the early years of the nineteenth century and for the Indian Army since it was formed in 1947. With their inherent military traits, the ex-servicemen from these British and Indian units constitute a valuable reserve backed by more than a century and a half of martial traditions.

Outside Nepal these soldiers are commonly known as Gurkha. The designation has no ethnic connotation; the term derives from the name of the old Kingdom of Gorkha (Gurkha), the territory of which was roughly that of the present-day administrative district of Gurkha, in the mountains some 90 miles west of the Katmandu Valley.

Soldiers from the old Kingdom established an international reputation for their military prowess during the eighteenth century by their successful invasions of Tibet. As the Gurkha Kingdom expanded eastward across the Himalayas to Sikkim, the King's warriors, taken from all groups in the area, came to be known to the outside world as Gurkha soldiers.

Nepal's military establishment in 1963 consisted of the Royal Nepalese Army, predominantly an infantry force of about 10,000 men—slightly more than one-tenth of 1 percent of the total population. The Army is organized into three brigades, supplemented by miscellaneous smaller units, including a mountain artillery battery, the Royal Guards detachment and a band. Each brigade consists of one or more rifle battalions, and a large proportion are stationed in the Katmandu Valley.

Also in the military establishment and under Army control since 1962 is a detachment called the Home Guards, formerly known as the Armed Police Force. The total strength of the Home Guards detachment is about that of a brigade, but its military value is questionable because of its dispersion in small and relatively isolated groups throughout the country, its inadequate equipment and its lack of unit training. There is no air force or navy (see ch. 21, Public Order and Internal Security).

The military establishment appears to be a reliable arm of the government. Discipline is good and morale is enhanced by the volunteer character of the service, pay as good or better than that of civilians in positions of comparable responsibility and, above all, the traditionally high prestige accorded to the military profession. The officer corps seems to be free of political ambitions, and the military apparently remained neutral in the competition among various political leaders which marked the period just before December 15, 1960, when the King took control of the government. Ethnic differences do not seem to be a source of friction within the armed forces.

BACKGROUND

The military prowess of the Nepalese soldier first became known outside the country in the eighteenth century, when forces from what was then known as the Kingdom of Gorkha invaded Tibet (see ch. 2, Historical Setting). Within Nepal itself certain ethnic groups, such as the Magar, Gurung, Limbu, Rai and Thakuri (a caste of the Pahari ethnic group), had much earlier won a reputation as "warrior tribes." The Magar, Gurung and Limbu furnished the bulk of the Kingdom's soldiers up to the rank of captain. Higher ranks tended to be filled from the Thakuri, Chetri and Rai groups. These officers came almost exclusively from families of the ruling elite. Caste consciousness, however, did not seem to be a problem (see ch. 4, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, armies were raised when needed and disbanded when the need ended. This practice created a sizable reserve of trained veterans, but it resulted in a recurring unemployment problem. In general, only members of the higher castes were retained in the service between the wars.

The first steps toward the creation of a sizable permanent military establishment were taken by Prime Minister Bhim Sen Thapa (1804–37), who raised the Army's strength from 10,000 to 15,000 men. In addition he built arsenals, ordnance workshops and cantonments. The large parade ground constructed at Tundikhel in Katmandu at that time is still in use. Development continued, and in 1857 some 9,000 Nepalese troops under Prime Minister Jooda Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana rendered valuable service to the British during the Indian mutiny, particularly in the relief of Lucknow.

Early in the 1880's Prime Minister Rana Udip Singh (1877–85) introduced a militia system by which the Army could be rapidly expanded on short notice—an expedient which was of great value to the Allied

Powers in World War I. Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher (1901–29) introduced many military reforms in the course of a program of modernization of government services generally. Among measures affecting the Army were the adoption of translated British military manuals for the use of troop units; promotion examinations; improved standards of efficiency; reorganization of administrative processes; and payment of all ranks in cash, rather than in land or grain, as formerly practiced.

Despite these reforms, the officer corps, above the rank of captain, continued to be limited to members of the Rana family and to the Thakuri, Chetri and Rai groups. Moreover, barracks were inadequate to accommodate all men in the 26 battalions stationed in the Katmandu Valley. Many soldiers had to seek their own food and lodging in towns and villages near their garrisons.

During World War I the Nepalese Army was expanded and 6 new regiments, totaling more than 20,000 men—all volunteers—were sent to India, most of them to the North-West Frontier Province, to release British and Indian troops for service on overseas fronts. In World War II two brigades arrived in India where they served until after the end of hostilities. Other elements served in Southeast Asia, particularly in Burma.

By 1950 the Army was composed of 31 battalions, and all important posts were held by members of the Rana ruling family. Many of the battalions had just returned from India and Burma. Back in Nepal, they found that pay, rations, equipment and general conditions of service contrasted unfavorably with what they had known under the British. Many of the general officers had never served in lower ranks. The bulk of the Army's strength of 45,000 men was stationed in the Katmandu Valley, where the Rana government, aware of growing opposition, could keep the officers under surveillance. Forced by the lack of barracks to find lodging where they could, many soldiers had to leave their private billets at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning to arrive at their drill formations on time.

Many of the veterans of World War II left the service at the end of their enlistments. Many officers were unqualified to give proper training to the young replacements, and poor pay added to mounting discontent. Hence, by the time of the revolt in 1950, many soldiers were in a mood to defect to the anti-Rana forces. Most of the remainder, though not actively disloyal, were unenthusiastic in their support of the government (see ch. 21, Public Order and Internal Security).

GURKHA

The old Kingdom of Gorkha was conquered in the mid-sixteenth century by Drabya Shah, the founder of the dynasty of Shah Thakuri kings which has reigned ever since (see ch. 2, Historical Setting). Two centuries later, the Gorkha (then known as Gurkha) Kingdom began a major expansion under energetic, young King Prithvi Narayan Shah (r., 1742-75), who captured the Katmandu Valley and unified numerous petty kingdoms while consolidating his control over an area substantially the same as that of modern Nepal. As Gurkha rule expanded, control of the conquered territories was left mainly to district governors, called *bada hakim,* who were responsible for establishing military strongpoints and for maintaining a local militia.

Before the end of the eighteenth century the Gurkha ruler had sent successful military expeditions into Tibet and China. Pressure southward and westward, however, met resistance from the military forces of the British East India Company which were expanding its influence northward into the Himalayas. Increasingly frequent clashes of the opposing forces culminated in the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1814–16, in which the victorious British were impressed by the fighting qualities of the Gurkha soldiers. When Nepalese General Amar Singh Thapa was forced to capitulate west of the Kali River in May 1815, the remnants of his troops were accepted into the British military service. By the Treaty of Sagauli, in 1816, the British recognized the sovereignty of Nepal and received permission to recruit Nepalese into the British Indian Army.

Recruiting, which actually began in 1815, had to be carried on semiclandestinely even after the Treaty came into effect, since British military representatives, as foreigners, were forbidden by law to enter the country. The three battalions organized from General Thapa's conquered forces were expanded into regiments, and each regiment sent its own recruiters into the interior. Applicants for service came almost entirely from the mountain regions. The ethnic groups with a martial tradition were represented, including the Limbu and Rai from the area of the Kiranti in the eastern section, the Magar, Gurung and Tamang from the central part, and the Chetri and Thakuri castes from the west (see ch. 4, Ethnic Groups and Languages).

The Gurkha units soon proved to be a valuable asset to the British Indian Army. Impressed by the loyalty and effectiveness of the Gurkha during the Indian Mutiny of 1857, and notably at the siege of Delhi, the British awarded them battle honors and organized two additional regiments.

Recruiting continued, and the adaptability of Gurkha troops to various types and conditions of combat was shown by their performance in the Second Afghan War (1878-80) and in the Boxer Rebellion (1900). By 1908 the Gurkha Brigade had been formed. This was a flexible unit, in peacetime numbering about 12,000 men organized into 10 regiments, each consisting of 2 rifle battalions. Other Gurkha units included the Assam Rifles, Burma Rifles, Indian Armed Police and Burma Military Police. Regiments and battalions were designated numerically. For example, the Second Battalion of the Seventh Gurkha Rifles is commonly referred to with pride by its members as the 2/7.

Until 1914 the British recruited about 1,500 men a year to keep the 20 Gurkha battalions up to strength. As a rule, men from the same ethnic group were assigned to the same units. About 7 regiments were composed of Magar, Tamang and Gurung; 2 regiments were recruited from the Rai and Limbu; and 1 from the Chetri and Thakuri. In many instances several generations of one family have served in the same regiment. The Magar, Gurung and Rai, who over the years have supplied most of the recruits, have come to be regarded as the true Gurkha, but the Limbu, Chetri, Tamang, Sunwar and Thakuri are also included in the category. On a percentage basis the Gurung group provide a higher proportion of its total population for the military service than any other group.

The recruits, after examination and enlistment by Gurkha regimental representatives at assembly points near their homes, were sent to collection centers in northern India, mainly at Gorakhpur and at Ghum near Darjeeling, for final processing and assignment to units. The Nepalese Government encouraged recruitment by assurances that service with the British forces would be regarded as service in the Nepalese Army and that special efforts would be made to provide employment for the returning veterans. This policy was based on the view that these trained veterans would add to the military strength of Nepal. Recruitment was also helped by the relatively high pay and pensions and the opportunities for advancement in noncommissioned ranks.

During World War I the Nepalese Government agreed to maintain recruitment at a level which would sustain the existing Gurkha units and make possible the creation of additional ones. The battalions were increased to 33, and Gurkha units were placed at the disposal of the British high command for service on all fronts. Many volunteers were assigned to noncombat units, such as the Army Bearer Corps and the labor battalions, but they also were in combat in France, Gallipoli, Palestine, Baluchistan, Waziristan, Mesopotamia and Burma. Despite some 20,000 casualties, replacements were always available. By the end of 1918 about 200,000 men had volunteered for service in the British Army.

During World War II the total number of Gurkha battalions in the British service was increased to 45. About 110,000 men passed through 10 Gurkha training centers to serve in line units which fought on almost every front, including France, Italy, North Africa, Greece, Cyprus, Iraq, Iran, Burma, Indochina, Indonesia, Malaya and in Singapore, where reportedly Gurkha troops were the last to cease fire when the British surrendered to the Japanese. Casualties in all theaters mounted to approximately 25,000 men.

By the end of 1946 various specialized units had been created, such as paratroops, signal corps, engineers and military police. When India attained independence in 1947, the old Gurkha Brigade was disbanded. Four regiments remained in the British service and six passed to the new Indian Army, which recruited an additional regiment to make a total of seven. As of late 1963 a large proportion of those with the British were in Malaya, where from May 1948 to August 1960 they formed the backbone of the offensive, which decimated the Communist terrorist forces and brought the state of emergency in the peninsula to an end. Others have been in the defense of North Borneo against Indonesian-sponsored guerrilla depredations, and a few are on garrison duty in Hong Kong.

The Gurkha in the service of India, estimated at some 50,000, constitute about 10 percent of that country's army. Since 1948 many have been on the Kashmir frontier, facing the Pakistan Army. Many others were stationed in the North East Frontier Agency, where they played a major role in resisting the Chinese Communist attack in October 1962. A lesser number served with distinction in the Congo as a part of the Indian contingent in the United Nations forces.

After 1950 the King permitted British and Indian officers to visit the recruiting areas inside the country. The British established a recruiting center at Dharan Bazar, about 25 miles north of Biratnagar in the Eastern Tarai. They also opened centers at Pokhara and Paklihawa south of Butwal in the Western Tarai. The Indians use the old collection centers at Gorakhpur and Ghum near Darjeeling.

Besides the military advantage accruing to the country from the presence of some 60,000 to 70,000 trained and disciplined Gurkha veterans, they represent a valuable human resource. Service abroad has widened their horizons, and military training and discipline have taught them not only how to obey but how to give orders. Many have gained specialized skills in communications and engineer units. Most have had some training in such practical subjects as sanitation, hygiene, agriculture and the building trades.

The Gurkha also play an important role in the country's economy. The cash inflow derived from annual pensions, remittances to families or savings taken home in a lump sum by discharged veterans or by servicemen on leave is a major source of foreign exchange. In 1962 the Ministry of Finance estimated that about NR10 million (for value of the Nepalese rupee, see Glossary) came into the country annually as pensions to men formerly in the British service. Pensions to Indian ex-servicemen exceed this amount.

In some Gurung villages about half of the families have one or more pensioners. For many families, hope of financial solvency rests on their sons returning home with a substantial sum saved during a 3-year enlistment. Such income also indirectly benefits others than the recipients when it goes into circulation in the purchase of consumer goods, the payment of debts, the acquisition of agricultural equipment or investment in small commercial ventures.

The returned Gurkha is accorded high status in his village and he is apt to be a community leader. In many localities Gurkha veterans have combined their talents and pooled their capital to build schools and dispensaries and to promote other cooperative projects. The children of Gurkha servicemen enjoy special educational opportunities in Army schools and in scholarships to certain other schools organized by Gurkha veterans.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

Terrain, weather and logistic considerations present special problems to any military force operating in the country. Ground units would have to be equipped to cope with climatic extremes of monsoonal rains and drought and of jungle heat and high-altitude cold. They would encounter terrain ranging from the world's highest and most deeply gorged mountains to the deep swamps and dense forests of the Gangetic Plain (see ch. 3, Geography and Population).

Troops and supplies would have ample cover, but their movement would be extremely difficult. The use of motor transport would be impossible except for short stretches in limited areas where roads are available. Often the use of pack animals is precluded by the narrow, rocky trails around cliffs and the lack of bridges across steep-sided mountain streams. In many places all supplies would have to be moved by human bearers.

Throughout the country the terrain lends itself to ambush and the hit-and-run tactics of guerrilla warfare. Thus, the local inhabitants, familiar with the countryside and accustomed to the severe climatic conditions, would have a decided tactical advantage over an invading force.

The country's northern boundary of some 670 miles faces the Chinese Communists in Tibet. The remaining boundaries, totaling about 930 miles, are with India and the Indian protectorate of Sikkim. The mountains in the north constitute a formidable obstacle for military ground forces bent on moving in any direction. Troops could move with difficulty through about 15 passes, most of them above 9,000 feet in elevation. In contrast, terrain along the Indian boundary is relatively favorable, in most places, for military operations, particularly for movements southward toward the Gangetic Plain. Movements northward from the Plain would soon be channeled into narrow mountain valleys.

On the north the danger to Nepal would appear to be not so much from large-scale invasion as from infiltrations of subversive agents—a tactic which the Chinese Communists could employ without risking the commitment of sizable military forces. Nepal, were it to convert into a satellite of the Chinese Communists, could be used by them as an advanced base dominating the strategically important Gangetic Plain from Delhi to Calcutta. Hence, India must regard Nepal as a critical salient in its front facing the Chinese Communists.

In the event of a major armed clash between the two largest Asian powers, Nepal, squeezed between them, would probably become an operational area for the opposing forces. The Nepalese then would be subjected to great pressures, as the Chinese and Indians each would seek to win partisans. The opposing pressures would tend to restrict the Nepalese Government's freedom of action and force it into alignment with one side or the other.

The potentialities for military or subversive action against Nepal by the Chinese Communists are heightened by their new, strategic road constructed parallel to the Nepalese-Tibetan boundary only about 50 miles inside Tibet. At least five feeder roads lead southward from this main road through passes into Nepal. From east to west, the first road leads to the Rakha La (Rakha Pass), near the principal area of the restive Limbu ethnic group; the second extends to Kodari, the northern terminus of a road being constructed to Katmandu with Chinese Communist aid; the third leads from the Chinese Communist military base and airfield at Girang Dzong (Kyirong) to the relatively low 8,000-foot pass at Rasua Garhi; the fourth runs from the Chinese Communist military garrison near the Kore La in Tibet to Mustang in Nepal, an area used by Tibetan Khampa refugees to stage forays into Tibet; and the fifth is from Taklakhar on the Karnali River, through the Lipulek La to the west bank of the Kali River on the boundary between Nepal and Uttar Pradesh, India (see ch. 3 Geography and Population; ch. 21, Public Order and Internal Security).

Most of the people in each of the geographic regions live mainly on local resources, requiring little from the outside. Hence, the loss of any particular area, except the Katmandu Valley, would not necessarily bring about the capitulation of the entire country. However, the loss of the Valley, traditionally the heart and political center of Nepal, could well mean the end of organized resistance.

Open and rolling terrain is found in relative few areas, such as in parts of the Katmandu Valley and in the Western and Far Western Tarai. Large-scale airdrops would be feasible in these places during the dry season (mid-October to mid-May), but subsequent troop movement into the interior would soon be hampered by the Himalayan massif. During the monsoon season (mid-June to mid-September) fog, low clouds and torrential rains frequently interfere with air operations and would make airdrops of troops and supplies extremely hazardous.

MILITARY ALLIANCES

Nepal, bordered by Communist China to the north and India to the south, is signatory to no formal military alliances and has sought to avoid any appearance of political alignment which might complicate its relations with either of its big neighbors. In keeping with this position the government has concluded treaties of amity and friendship with both India and China. The treaty with India provides for mutual assistance in the event of aggression against either country. The earliest document of this nature was the Sino-Nepalese Treaty of 1792, signed after the Chinese had defeated the forces of the Gorkha Kingdom at Nawakot, only 20 miles northwest of Katmandu. In the treaty the signatories agreed that henceforth they would regard China as a father to them, and they affirmed their understanding that China would come to the aid of Nepal should it ever be invaded by a foreign power (see ch. 13, Foreign Relations).

The Tibetan treaty was followed in 1816 by the Treaty of Sagauli, which terminated the 2-year Anglo-Nepalese war. Besides pledging mutual friendship, this treaty permitted the British to recruit Gurkha troops for the British Army in India. Under the treaty, which was not revised until 1923, Nepalese Army units came to Britain's aid on numerous occasions—notably in the Indian Mutiny of 1857, World War I, World War II and during the postwar anti-Communist campaign in Burma.

The Tibetan-Nepalese peace treaty of March 1856 (known as the Treaty of Thapathali), signed at the conclusion of a successful Nepalese 2-year campaign in Tibet, stipulated that Tibet pay annual tribute to Nepal and grant certain extraterritorial rights to Nepalese traders. It also pledged a mutual policy of nonaggression, and Nepal agreed to come to Tibet's assistance if Tibet should be invaded by the forces of "any other prince." A century later, in September 1956, the agreement was replaced by a treaty of amity and commerce with Communist China. The treaty ended Nepal's tribute income and extraterritorial privileges.

Two treaties with India and Great Britain have military significance. The tripartite treaty signed in 1947, when India became independent, divided the Gurkha Brigade between the British and Indian forces, and authorized each country to recruit Nepalese youths to their respective Gurkha units. The treaty permitted Gurkha units to serve in the British and Indian Armies for an unstipulated period, and it is still in force. A special agreement concluded in 1948 with the British authorized them to maintain a recruiting depot in Nepal to serve their Gurkha units. In April 1958 this agreement was renewed for another 10 years.

In 1950, with the changed situation brought about by the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet, Nepal signed a treaty of peace and friendship with India, which provides for consultations in case either country is threatened by foreign aggression. Furthermore, India is to make military aid available only if requested by Nepal. Prime Minister Nehru has repeatedly stated, in effect, that any attack on Nepal would be regarded as an aggression against India.

Agreements with Communist China lack direct military significance. Pledges of friendship and peaceful coexistence are mentioned in statements and joint communiques issued during interchanges of visits by government leaders. Nepal in 1960 reportedly rejected a Chinese Communist suggestion for a mutual nonaggression pact. Nevertheless, Chen Yi, Foreign Minister of Communist China, in October 1962 announced that if Nepal were attacked, China would be on Nepal's side. But the Nepalese press asserted that there had been no discussions regarding a mutual defense treaty.

RELATION TO THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Manpower and Materiel

Sufficient manpower is available to maintain an army of some 100,000 men in addition to those already serving in Gurkha units. The total male population between the ages of 15 and 49 is estimated to be approximately 2.4 million, of whom about 50 percent (1.2 million) are physically fit. In any major mobilization of manpower for military units, however, economic and logistical inadequacies would limit substantial expansion, even with outside support. Moreover, crop production would suffer from a lack of workers during the short but critical harvesting seasons.

Approximately 70,000 men are already in service: 10,000 in the Nepalese Army, 10,000 in British Gurkha units and 50,000 in Indian Gurkha units. Thus, roughly 90,000 additional physically fit men between the ages of 15 and 50, would be available for military mobilization. It is estimated that the ranks of the mobilized units could be filled largely by ex-servicemen—some 50,000 discharged or retired from British and Indian Gurkha units and about 30,000 who formerly served in the Nepalese Army (see ch. 3, Geography and Population; ch. 18, Labor).

All materiel, except for a few simple weapons and a small amount of ammunition, must be imported. The country's arsenal facilities are extremely limited, and raw materials are generally lacking. Only food, some clothing, a few tools and some articles of individual equipment can be obtained from local sources. Moreover, in prolonged combat operations involving heavy losses, the lack of sufficient manpower to replace battle casualties would limit the size of the military establishment.

Military Budget

The annual expenditure from state funds by the Ministry of Defense, according to published figures from official sources, almost doubled between the fiscal year 1956–57 and the fiscal year 1961–62. Despite this increase in funds reportedly expended by the Ministry of Defense, in percentage terms military outlay appears to have decreased from 29.3 percent of total government expenditures in 1956–57 to 15.1 percent in 1961–62.

The Ministry of Defense spends more than any other government agency, but the largest proportion of the funds—more than 66 percent in the fiscal year 1962–63—is expended on economic and social services by various other ministries. Most people probably are unaware of matters pertaining to the national budget, and there are no indications of any popular feeling that defense costs constitute an unduly heavy tax burden.

MISSIONS

The Army has the four-fold mission of backing up the country's Civil Police Force in the maintenance of internal security, manning 18 military check posts on the boundary with Tibet, performing ordinary police duties in areas where police units are not available, and assisting in the road building program by furnishing labor and technical help, particularly in building bridges and in surveying for new roads. The Army is also frequently used in emergency relief missions to localities stricken by fire, floods or landslides. In the 1959 elections, Army units took over police duties in some areas so that the Civil Police could be used to maintain order at the polls.

The Army has also been called upon to protect the integrity of the Crown. In December 1960, when the King took direct control of the government, Army units patrolled the streets of Katmandu, and a number of political leaders, including Cabinet members, reportedly were taken into custody and detained by the military pending disposition of their cases.

ORGANIZATION

The King has been Supreme Commander of the Royal Nepalese Army since the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1951, a position confirmed by the Constitution of December 1962. The King reserves for himself the portfolio of the Minister of Defense. Administration of the Ministry is a responsibility of the Secretary of the Ministry of Defense, a post held in 1963 by Major General Padam Bahadur Khatri. The secretary is aided by a personal assistant and two under secretaries (see fig. 15).

Also in the Ministry of Defense but responsible directly to the King

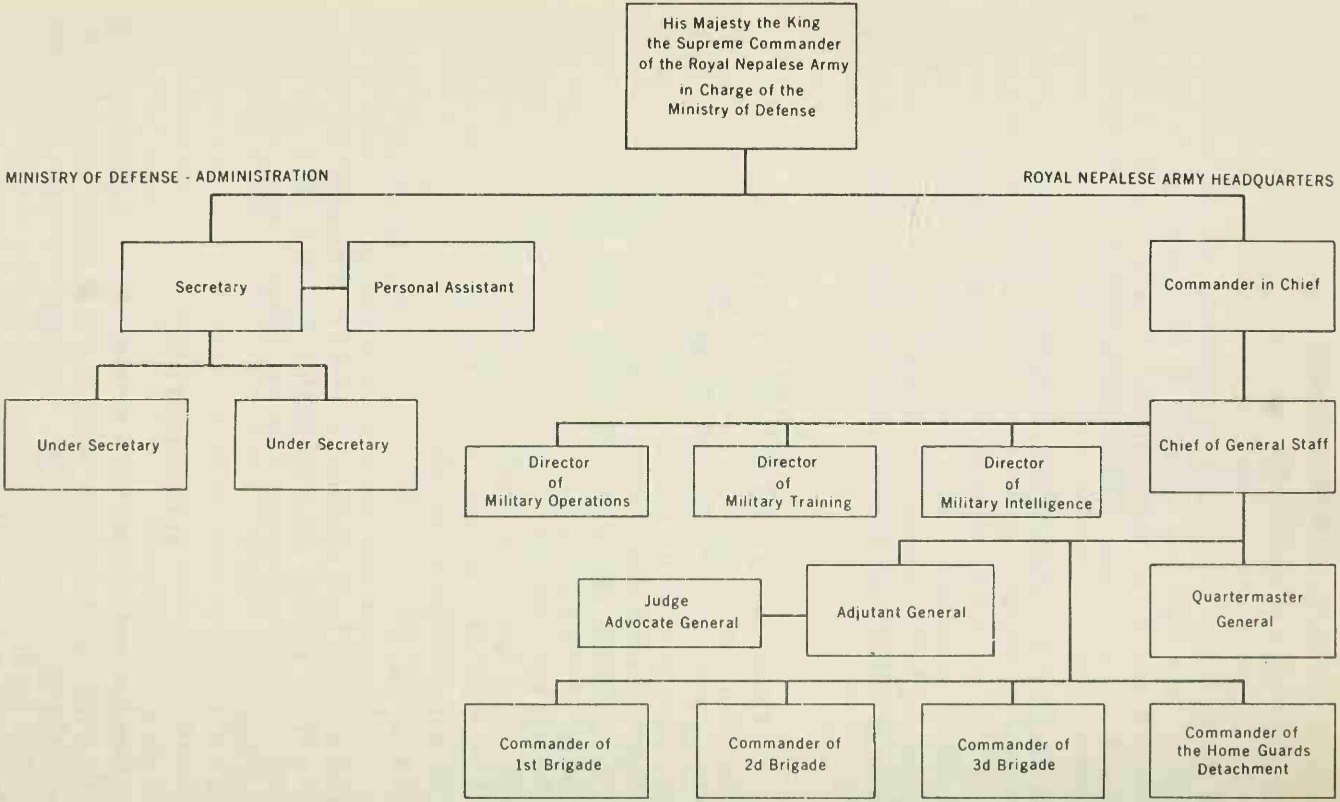

His Majesty the King the Supreme Commander of the Royal Nepalese Army in Charge of the Ministry of Defense
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE - ADMINISTRATION
ROYAL NEPALESE ARMY HEADQUARTERS
Secretary
Personal Assistant
Under Secretary
Under Secretary
Commander in Chief
Chief of General Staff
Director of Military Operations
Director of Military Training
Director of Military Intelligence
Judge Advocate General
Adjutant General
Quartermaster General
Commander of 1st Brigade
Commander of 2d Brigade
Commander of 3d Brigade
Commander of the Home Guards Detachment

Figure 15. Organization of the Ministry of Defense and the Royal Nepalese Army, 1963.

is the Royal Nepalese Army Headquarters, which, patterned after the British system, includes two functional groups—general staff and administration. The highest post in the Headquarters is that of Commander in Chief, held in 1963 by General Nir Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana. He is assisted by the Chief of General Staff, Lieutenant General Surendra Bahadur Shah, who in turn is assisted by the directors of three small staff sections: military operations, training and intelligence. The Chief of General Staff is also in charge of two administrative staff officers: the Adjutant General, responsible for personnel matters and military justice; and the Quartermaster General, responsible for supply. Both hold the rank of major general. Directly responsible to the Chief of Staff are the commanders of the 1st, 2d and 3d Brigades and of the Home Guards detachment, each with the rank of brigadier general.

TRAINING

Training is modeled on that of the Indian Army which, in turn, has been strongly influenced by its years of service as part of the British military establishment. An Indian military mission arrived in Katmandu on April 7, 1952, soon after the attempted coup by Kunwar Indrajit Singh. The main purpose of the mission apparently was to assist in correcting disciplinary, training and organizational defects, the seriousness of which was revealed during the attempted coup led by Singh.

The mission consisted of a major general and an instructional staff of about 100 commissioned and noncommissioned officers. Its members, except for a few technical officers, were selected almost entirely from Indian Gurkha units. During the course of a strict training program, many misfits were eliminated from the service and more selective methods of recruiting were adopted. An effort was made to base promotions on proficiency rather than on family connections. Many of the older officers who were judged to be unqualified to carry out the duties attached to their rank either resigned or were dismissed. In marked contrast with the past, the remaining officers began to take an interest in their men and, in effect, a new Army was created. Despite resentment from some dismissed officers and opposition from certain political elements, relations between the mission and the Nepalese military became generally satisfactory.

By the end of 1956 the Army had been reduced in size from about 25,000 ill-paid, poorly trained, undisciplined men to a force of about 6,000, which was receiving rigorous training and adequate pay. Specialized units, such as signal, supply, engineer, mortar and mountain artillery, had been created. Indian doctors established an Army medical detachment and trained its corpsmen. Selected officers and men were being sent to India for advanced and specialized training. In 1958 the military mission was replaced by the Indian Military Training and

Advisory Group, consisting of about 20 officers, headed by a major general. This group continued to function in Katmandu until December 1963, when the responsibilities were reduced to liaison work on common defense problems and its name was changed to the Indian Military Liaison Group.

As of the end of 1963, training appears to be limited to basic drills and fundamental instruction of individuals, squads and platoons in the operation and tactical use of their weapons. Schedules are frequently disrupted or suspended by the assignment of Army units to road construction work or other nonmilitary tasks. A favorable influence on training standards, however, is the presence of many former members of the British and Indian Gurkha regiments.

Enlistees, before being assigned to units, receive almost a year of training under officers and noncommissioned officers specially chosen for this task. This long training period apparently is necessitated by the high illiteracy rate among the recruits. Privates and noncommissioned officers who are candidates for promotion are given extra instruction several hours each day in a so-called noncommissioned officers' platoon. Promotions are given to those who pass training tests. A small group of noncommissioned officers is selected each year for advanced, or specialist, training in Indian Army schools, and at least two officer candidates are sent annually to the British Military Academy at Sandhurst, England. On the whole the Nepalese Army probably is sufficiently trained for effective guerrilla operations or for combat in small units—the type of warfare which would be most likely to be fought in its own territory.

FOREIGN INFLUENCE

The strongest foreign influence on military training and organization is that of the British. A large proportion of the officers and noncommissioned officers and some of the privates have served in British Gurkha units. Most of these have attended British training courses; some have received instruction at Sandhurst, England; and virtually all are indoctrinated in British military practices. The standards of military discipline, duty and proficiency acquired through this experience are important factors making for the reliability of the post-Rana army.

Indian influence dates from soon after 1947 when servicemen, returning from tours with Gurkha units in the new Indian Army, began to enlist in the Nepalese Army. When the Indian military mission arrived in 1952, this influence was intensified. British impressions, however, remained dominant, as Indian military concepts and practices are basically British.

Indian influence was further strengthened by the cooperation of both forces on several occasions when Indian troops at Nepal's request helped quell disturbances near the common boundary. Later, Indian soldiers and technicians assisted in manning some of the check posts on the frontier with Tibet. Despite these close associations, the government has not permitted the garrisoning of Indian troops in Nepal, and the recruiting centers for Indian Gurkha units are on the Indian side of the frontier.

Chinese Communist propaganda directed mainly against Gurkha recruiting activity does not appear to have any noticeable success among the Nepalese. On the other hand, Chinese operations in Tibet, Ladakh and the North East Frontier Agency have no doubt heightened Nepalese awareness of the importance of mutual security arrangements between Nepal and India. The Nepalese are also apprehensively conscious of Chinese Communist sensitivity to any military collaboration between Nepal and India.

QUALITY OF MANPOWER

Physique and standards of physical fitness vary according to ethnic origin and area of residence. Men from the tropical lowlands of the Tarai are less hardy than those from the mountain regions. As a result, virtually all of the recruits accepted for enlistment in Gurkha or Nepalese Army units come from the upland areas, where men are accustomed to carrying heavy loads for long distances over precipitous and rocky trails at high altitudes. On the other hand, the incidence of infectious disease is high in the general population, and malaria, tuberculosis, syphilis and dysentery would probably be present in any sizable group of new recruits in spite of efforts to screen out the physically unfit before enlistment. In the service, however, medical care, adequate diet and hygienic measures greatly reduce the incidence of disease, and experience in the varied environments of Asia, Europe and North Africa has shown that illness in Nepalese units has not been a serious problem (see ch. 6, Health and Welfare).

Nepalese troops are accustomed to creating their own amusements and many excel in one or more outdoor sports. On the whole, they are good hunters, experienced in the use of firearms, and accustomed to living on their own resources for long periods in the mountains.

They have distinguished themselves in hand-to-hand fighting and in guerrilla operations. Gurkha unit histories are replete with accounts of courageous stands in the face of heavy odds, and in the two world wars 12 Victoria Crosses (comparable to the United States Medal of Honor) were awarded to Gurkha soldiers.

The different languages of the various ethnic groups in the military service present no problem as virtually all soldiers speak Nepali. Caste and ethnic differences are minimized by the policy of assigning recruits from the same area and ethnic groups to the same unit. Low-caste enlistees are assigned to service units. Caste consciousness also seems to diminish within the military framework.

RECRUITMENT REGULATIONS

Recruitment regulations, published November 19, 1962, prescribe that qualified candidates for enlistment appear before a selection and recruiting board composed of an officer from the Adjutant General's Department as chairman and four members, consisting of an appointed recruiting officer, a unit or training center commander, a medical officer and the chief officer or representative of the military registration office as secretary. Candidates must be at least 18 and not more than 25 years of age, physically fit, more than 5 feet 3½ inches tall and not engaged in political activity. Exceptions are made for honorably discharged former Gurkha soldiers, who are under 36 years of age and physically fit, and who have not been convicted of any criminal offense. Appointment is confirmed only after the candidate's statements regarding his residence, age, caste and address are attested to by an officer of the Army or of the civil service. Recruits may be dismissed any time during the first year of training if it is discovered that they fail to meet the entrance qualifications.

Upon entering the service the recruit signs a contract to participate in the drills and training prescribed by Army regulations, to obey orders wherever he may be sent, to protect the life and throne of the King, and to arrest or report any person threatening the King. Enlistment is for a 10-year period, except for former Gurkha soldiers, who enlist for 3 years. Upon discharge the serviceman, if he does not reenlist, agrees to be available for duty if called upon, as long as he is physically fit.

MORALE FACTORS

The surplus of volunteers and the lack of need for conscription suggest that the morale of the new Army is good. Evident factors contributing to this are economic security, the high prestige traditionally accorded to the military, relatively good pay, and opportunities for advancement and for the acquisition of special skills. Extra pay is provided for certain duties entailing unusually heavy expenses or responsibilities. Pay schedules also include allocations for rations and travel allowances while on duty and for pensions upon retirement.

Military activities are seldom mentioned in the press or in the public statements of government leaders. Both officers and soldiers appear to be well regarded by the people, and it would seem that the work of servicemen on road construction projects and on disaster relief missions has contributed importantly to this attitude.

Ranks

The rank structure is modeled after that of the Indian Army (see table 14). The honorary rank of field marshal is held by the King and by several venerated retired officers, including Kaiser Shamsher (the King's uncle) and Hari Shamsher (the King's father-in-law), for their services to the Crown. King Mahendra also received the honorary rank of field marshal in the Pakistan Army, bestowed by President Mohammed Ayub Khan on May 12, 1963, during a state visit to Nepal. As of mid-1963 the highest rank held by an officer on active duty was that of general, held only by the Commander in Chief, Nir Shamsher Jang Bahadur Rana (see figs. 16, 17 and 18).

Table 14. Rank Structure in the Nepalese Army, 1963

Nepalese Rank	United States Equivalent
Officers	
Field Marshal	General of the Armies
General	General
Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General
Major General	Major General
Brigadier General	Brigadier General
Colonel	Colonel
Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel
Major	Major
Captain	Captain
Lieutenant	Lieutenant
Second Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant
Junior Commissioned Officers	
Subedar Major	No United States equivalent
Subedar	Do
Jemadar	Do
Noncommissioned Officers and Privates	
Havildar	Sergeant
Naik	Corporal
Lance Naik	Private First Class
Sepoy (Trainee Private)	Private
Jawan	Recruit

Source: Adapted from United States Government sources.

Decorations

Decorations and awards are bestowed only by the King, under the provisions of the Constitution of December 16, 1962. Investitures are made on special occasions, such as the King's birthday, to military and police personnel and civilians. Medals and decorations are proudly

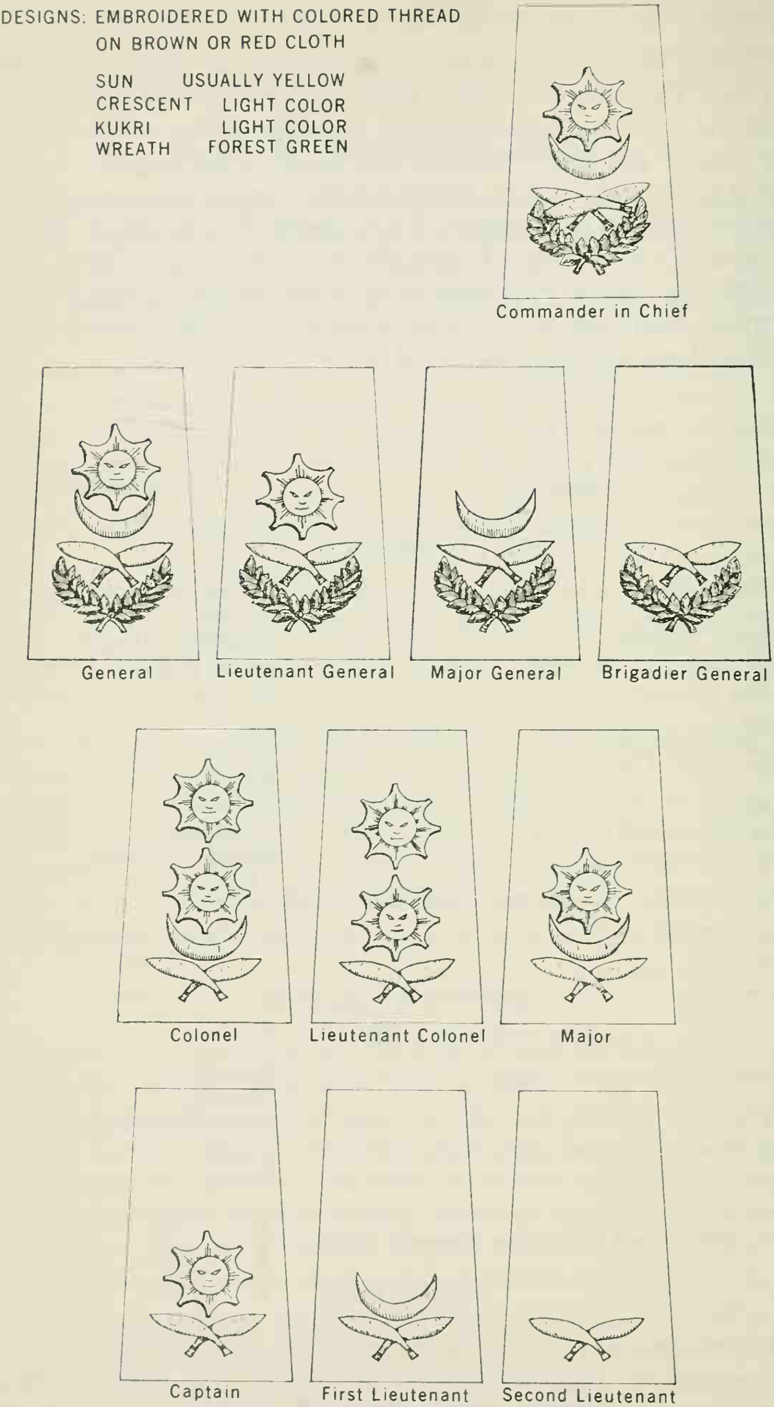
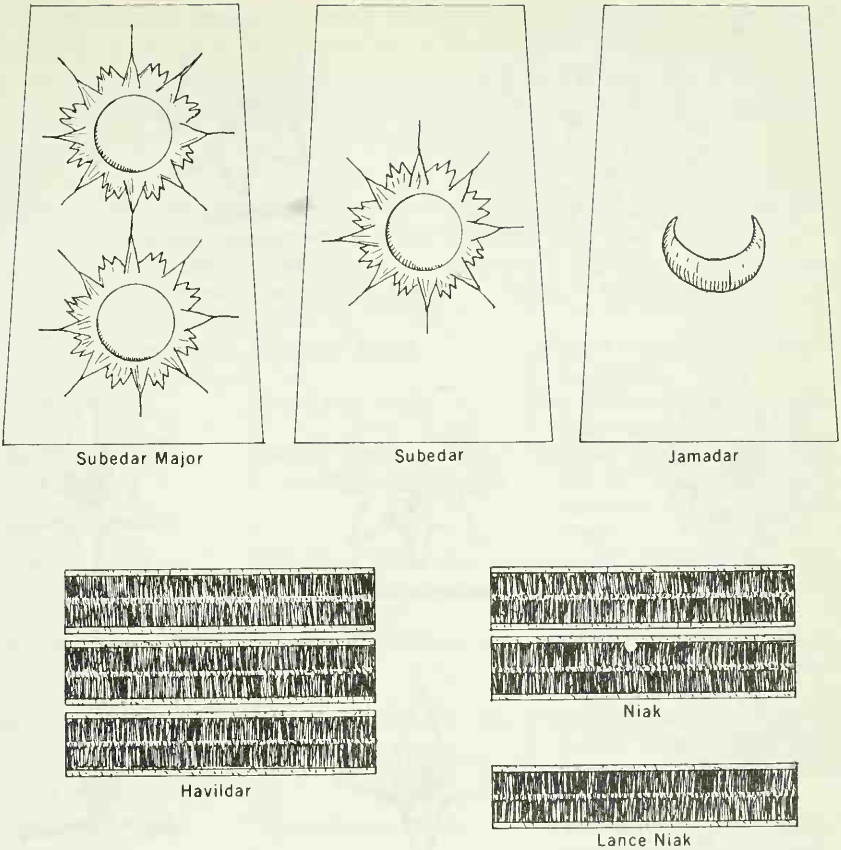

DESIGNS: EMBROIDERED WITH COLORED THREAD ON BROWN OR RED CLOTH
SUN USUALLY YELLOW
CRESCENT LIGHT COLOR
KUKRI LIGHT COLOR
WREATH FOREST GREEN
Commander in Chief
General
Lieutenant General
Major General
Brigadier General
Colonel
Lieutenant Colonel
Major
Captain
First Lieutenant
Second Lieutenant

Figure 16. Shoulder Insignia of Rank, Royal Nepalese Army Officers.



DESIGNS: EMBROIDERED WITH COLORED THREAD ON BROWN CLOTH

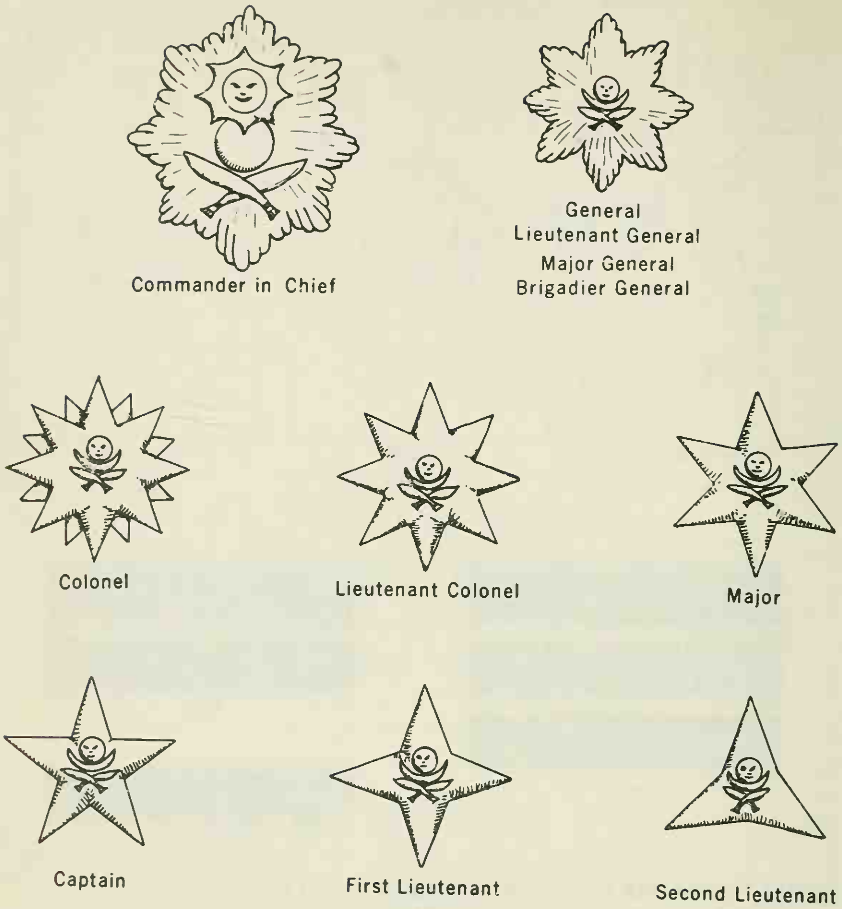
SUN	USUALLY YELLOW
CRESCENT	LIGHT COLOR
SLEEVE BAR	DARK COLOR, RED BORDER

Figure 17. Insignia of Rank, Noncommissioned Officers and Privates, Royal Nepalese Army.

worn at formal ceremonies, and they are a prescribed part of the uniform for members of courts-martial while they are in session. The Gurkha, retired an active, are authorized to wear the decorations they received from the British or Indian Governments (see table 15).

Leave Policy

A liberal leave policy also contributes to morale. Leave is of three types: ordinary, home and sick. The maximum of 20 days' annual ordinary leave is not cumulative from year to year, nor can it be granted for more than 10 days in one period except in an emergency or to attend the funeral services of a family member, when 14 and 20 days, respec-


Commander in Chief
General
Lieutenant General
Major General
Brigadier General
Colonel
Lieutenant Colonel
Major
Captain
First Lieutenant
Second Lieutenant

DESIGNS: EMBROIDERED WITH COLORED THREAD ON BROWN OR RED CLOTH

SUN	USUALLY YELLOW
STAR	USUALLY YELLOW
CRESCENT	LIGHT COLOR
KUKRI	LIGHT COLOR

Figure 18. Cap Insignia of Rank, Royal Nepalese Army Officers.

tively, are authorized. Home leave accrues to soldiers after 1 year of service at the rate of 45 days each year, but two-thirds of the leave lapses if it is not used during the year. Home leave may be advanced to a soldier in the event of a calamity in his family. Sick leave of up to 15 days annually is authorized. In case of serious prolonged illnesses, special sick leave is authorized for periods up to 2 years. Full salaries are paid during the first 3 months, and half salary for the next 6 months.

Thereafter, pay and allowances cease, and if the soldier is still unfit for duty at the end of 2 years he is discharged. If sickness or injury is caused by his service duties, special sick leave is granted with full pay and allowances until the soldier is cured or is given a disability discharge.

Table 15. Nepalese Decorations and Medals, for Military Personnel and Others
(in accepted order of precedence)

Title	Translation	Remarks
Ojaswi Rajyanya	Glorious Regal	Highest decoration. Reserved for royalty.
Om Ram Patta	Lord Ram Medal	For prime ministers and other high officials.
Nepal Tara	Nepal Medal (sometimes called Star of Nepal).	Awarded in five classes: I, II, III, IV and V. Class I is regarded as a very high honor.
Trishakti Patta	Medal of Three Powers: earth, heaven and underworld.	Awarded in four classes: I, II, III and IV. For outstanding achievement.
Gorkha Dakshin Bahu	Gorkha Right Hand	Awarded in four classes: I, II, III, and IV. For extraordinary service.
Gajendra Mokshya	Emancipation of Elephant.	Lifesaving medal. From legendary story of Vishnu saving elephant's life threatened by attacking crocodile.
Dirgha Seva Patta	Long Service Medal	Awarded for 30 years' faithful service to the government.
Nepal Pratap Bardhak	Nepal Powerful Medal	Awarded for adventuresome and courageous achievements, including research.

Source: Adapted from *Nepal Gazette*, XII, No. 49, March 25, 1963; and from United States Government sources.

Ration allowances for the period of ordinary leave are paid in advance. Leave periods are increased by 1 day for each 16 miles the soldier must travel on foot to his home. If his trip is made by automobile, plane or train, only the time spent on the journey can be added. Leave may not be granted to more than 25 percent of a unit at any one time.

Military Justice

The military court system consists basically of courts-martial, similar in composition and jurisdiction to those of the Indian Army. Courts-martial are of four kinds: general, district, summary general and summary. A general court-martial is convened by the Commander in Chief or an officer deputized by him. It consists of five or more officers, each with 3 or more years of commissioned service. Attending the court, but not a member, is an officer of the Judge Advocate General's Department or an officer designated by the Judge Advocate General. The court is authorized to impose any sentence prescribed by Army regulations. A district court-martial consists of three or more officers, each with a minimum of 2 years of commissioned service, and it may impose any sentence other than the death penalty. A summary general court-martial consists of three or more officers, with no requirement as to the length of their commissioned service. A summary court-martial may be convened by the commander of a department or detachment (presumably of battalion size), and he acts as the court.

The death sentence may be imposed for treason, mutiny, desertion, inciting panic and for surrendering troops, arms or garrisons to the enemy, with a finding of cowardice. Authorized punishment for dereliction of military duties or regulations in time of war is generally twice as severe as that prescribed for the same offenses committed in time of peace.

The disciplinary powers of officers and noncommissioned officers are somewhat more extensive than in the United States military service. Unit commanders may impose up to 30 days' confinement in prison or restriction to barracks. The most common forms of company punishment include extra guard duty, suspension from duty or from supervisory assignments, fines of up to 14 days' pay, detention of pay until a financial or property loss is compensated, reprimand and warning. Junior commanders may demote noncommissioned officers with the rank of *havildar* (sergeant) or lower.

LOGISTICS

Logistical problems would be paramount in any military operation in the country. The inadequacies of food resources, industrial capacity and transportation facilities create extraordinary difficulties with respect to supply, distribution, troop movement and evacuation. Motorable roads are almost completely lacking in the mountain regions, and in the Tarai are limited to a few short, intermittent stretches (see ch. 16, Character and Structure of the Economy).

Food production in most areas is barely sufficient to support the local population. In the lowlands, ground movement would virtually halt during the wet season because of extensive flooding, washed-out bridges and deep mud. In the mountains, troops would have to march single file over precarious trails subject to washouts, landslides and avalanches of boulders, ice and snow. Stream crossing points are limited to a few fords and flimsy suspension bridges. In the entire mountain area only about 20 bridges are suitable for pack animals. Supplies, including rations, would have to be carried by porters. Drops by helicopters and airplanes could be made only in favorable weather and in the restricted areas accessible to troops.

Airlift capabilities are limited to several C–47-type civilian planes of the Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation and to 3 others of the same type received from Communist China late in 1963. The principal airfield is at Katmandu; at 12 airstrips in the outlying districts 2-motor planes can be landed in daylight during fair weather. Since all the airstrips except those at Gurkha and Pokhara are near the boundary with India, they would be of little use in moving troops or supplies toward the Tibetan border. Long-distance lateral movements in the mountain area are generally more easily made by going south to the Indian plains and reentering Nepal at another point than by traveling directly.

Medical equipment and supplies are extremely scarce, and there are only about 130 qualified physicians in the country. Treatment of combat casualties would be restricted to rudimentary first aid. Evacuation during operations would present serious problems. Most of Nepal's 900 hospital beds are in the Katmandu Valley, and the 1 small military hospital is in Katmandu. Facilities in other areas consist of dispensary-type installations (see ch. 6, Health and Welfare).

THE MILITARY AND CIVIL ORDER

The military is completely subordinate to the King, both in theory and in practice. He is vested by the Constitution of December 16, 1962, with direct and extensive control over military affairs:

> A member of the National Panchayat before presenting proposed legislation pertaining to the Royal Army shall obtain the permission of His Majesty.
>
> If His Majesty is satisfied that there exists an emergency which threatens the country's security, war, external aggression or internal disturbance, he may proclaim a grave state of emergency, suspend all or part of the Constitution and assume any or all powers vested in any government body.
>
> His Majesty is vested with the Supreme Command of the Royal Army.
>
> His Majesty has powers to grant pardons and to remit or commute any sentence passed by any Court.
>
> Title, honors and decorations shall be conferred by His Majesty.
>
> His Majesty is not amenable to any court.

Because of the King's dual role as Supreme Commander of the Army and Minister of Defense, there is no intermediate echelon between the Crown and the Commander in Chief. The Ministry has been in charge of some member of the royal family since the end of Rana rule in 1951, except for a brief period in 1959–60, when Bishweshar Prasad Koirala was the incumbent. The importance assigned by the King to the loyalty of the Army to his person is apparent in the pledge prescribed for recruits to protect the life and throne of the King and in the military law prohibiting servicemen from engaging in political activity. Even before

1960, when the King took control of the government, the Army on the whole refrained from taking sides with the political leaders who were competing for power. Since 1960 the Army has proved to be a useful instrument in consolidating the King's position as head of state.

The civilian attitude toward the military is generally favorable. Soldiers usually conduct themselves circumspectly and without arrogance in their dealings with civilians. The soldier's favorable status with respect to pay and amenities may arouse envy but not resentment among civilians in positions of comparable responsibility.

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SIKKIM

Sikkim, to the east of Nepal, is a compact square-shaped country situated between two massive mountain spurs jutting southward from the main Himalayan range. Slightly smaller than Yellowstone National Park, it has an estimated population of about 165,000, composed mainly of Lepcha and Bhote ethnic groups and of relatively recent emigrants from Nepal. Most of its people live in rural areas in detached homesteads, generally a mile or more apart. Gangtok, the capital and largest town, with only about 7,000 inhabitants, is an overgrown village rather than an urban center. The country has common frontiers with Tibet on the north and east, Bhutan on the southeast, and India on the south, as well as with Nepal on the west (see fig. 1).

Of these four neighbors, Tibet has had the major role in influencing Sikkim's development and in shaping its cultural identity. Bhote (Bhotia) people began entering the country from eastern Tibet in the early fourteenth century, spread along the valleys of the Tista River and its tributaries, and gradually extended their control over the local Lepcha inhabitants. When Sikkim emerged as a distinct national entity in 1642, a family of Tibetan ancestral origin sat on the throne, and the foundations of a theocratic state, based on Tibetan Lamaism, had been established.

British domination, lasting from 1861 to 1947, brought about no significant weakening of the country's Lamaist cultural tradition; during the same period, however, Hindu cultural patterns, introduced by emigrants from Nepal who began arriving in the mid-nineteenth century, took a strong hold in the southern part of the country. With the advantage of available land in an undeveloped economic setting and the opportunity to profit greatly from their own efforts, the Nepalese flourished in Sikkim and made a major contribution to economic growth. By the early 1960's the Nepalese had become by far the largest segment of the population and Hindu culture had asserted itself to the point that some Sikkimese, including the Maharaja himself, feared that the Tibetan-related traditional culture was in danger of being submerged. While the monarch called for the preservation and strengthening of the indigenous tradition, at the same time he welcomed the efforts to modernize the country which India, having assumed the British protectorate in 1947, was undertaking.

The economy is mainly agrarian. Most of the people earn a livelihood from farming and animal husbandry; there is almost no industry, but handicrafts are well developed. Commerce, traditionally arising from the country's position on the shortest and easiest caravan route between Tibet and India, is also important. Gangtok is the commercial center as well as the capital. The country is not self-sufficient in food, and a continued effort is being made to increase exports to India, the source of most imports. There are no banks and the Indian rupee is the standard currency. A program to modernize the economy, carried out with Indian financial aid and technical assistance, has been fairly successful. Government revenues, for instance, almost doubled between 1956 and 1962 to IR7.8 million (for value of the Indian rupee, see Glossary).

Although it is theoretically a kingdom ruled by its own Maharaja, the country is actually a protectorate of India, particularly in respect to its foreign relations and the defense of its territorial integrity. It has no constitution, but several political parties have been formed. The Maharaja by proclamation of March 23, 1953, introduced certain features of a democratic system of government. The proclamation recognized the authority of an Indian-appointed *dewan*, whose responsibilities were similar to those of a prime minister. It also established a State Council, which had limited legislative functions, and an Executive Council, which served as a Cabinet. The *dewan* presided over both bodies.

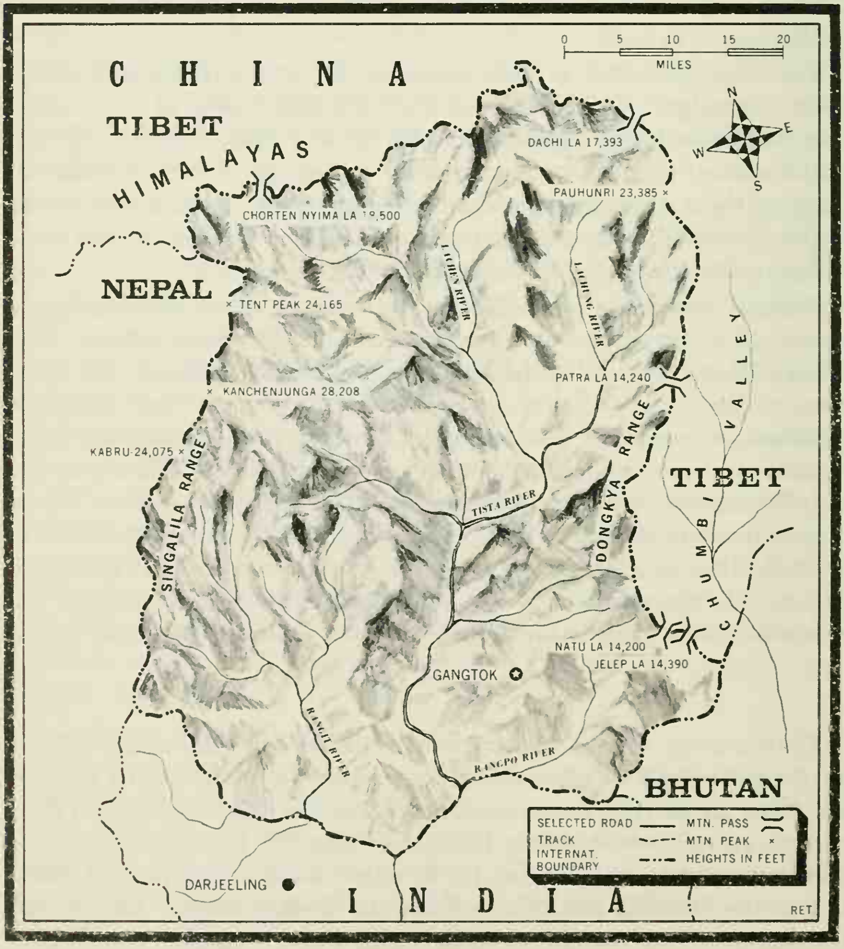
The basic character of this governmental structure remains essentially unchanged. In the aftermath of the aggressions of Communist Chinese forces in the Himalayan area in late 1962, however, certain modifications, possibly of a temporary nature, have been introduced. Chief of these were the replacement in early 1964 of the *dewan* by an Indian "principal administrative officer" and the substitution of a Consultative Committee for the State Council.

Political issues stem mainly from the demands of the Nepalese community for increased representation in governmental affairs. The Lepcha-Bhote politicians, led by the ruling family, contend that since many of the Nepalese are recent arrivals in the country, they should be regarded as temporary residents unqualified to have a dominant voice in state councils until their permanent assimilation into Sikkimese society is assured. Overshadowing all political activities is the Chinese Communist threat from Tibet. As in Nepal, this threat, particularly intensified by the Chinese aggressions of 1962 in the Himalayan region, has united, temporarily at least, the various groups in support of the defensive efforts undertaken by the Governments of Sikkim and India.

THE LAND

The northern, eastern and western boundaries of Sikkim are defined by the watersheds of three mountain ranges: on the north the crest of the main Himalayan range outlines the 55-mile boundary with Tibet; on the east and southeast, the Dongkya Range lies between Sikkim and Tibet for 55 miles and Bhutan for 20 miles; on the west, the watershed line on the Singalila Range constitutes the 50-mile frontier with Nepal. On the south, the 55-mile boundary with India is marked by no particular natural feature, except for a short distance by the Tista River and its tributary, the Rangpo River. The boundaries of modern Sikkim are virtually the same as those defined in 1890 by the British in an Anglo-Chinese agreement. The maximum distance from north to south is about 65 miles and that from east to west 55 miles, a total area of approximately 2,745 miles (see fig. 19).

The formidable mountain barrier enveloping the country on three sides is cut by only three passes with elevations lower than 17,000 feet. These passes are of particular importance as they provide a relatively easy route between Sikkim and the Chumbi Valley in the strategically situated wedge-shaped Tibetan area extending southward almost to the Indian border. Moreover, routes from Tibet through these passes lead directly to the narrow corridor, only 25 miles wide, which connects the main portion of India with Assam, the North East Frontier Agency and Nagaland.



CHINA
TIBET
HIMALAYAS
NEPAL
0 5 10 15 20
MILES
N
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W
S
DACHI LA 17,393
PAUHUNRI 23,385 ×
CHORTEN NYIMA LA 19,500
× TENT PEAK 24,165
LACHEN RIVER
LACHUNG RIVER
PATRA LA 14,240
× KANCHENJUNGA 28,208
KABRU 24,075 ×
SINGALILA RANGE
DONGKYA RANGE
TISTA RIVER
TIBET
CHUMBI VALLEY
NATU LA 14,200
JELEP LA 14,390
GANGTOK
RANGIT RIVER
RANGPO RIVER
BHUTAN
SELECTED ROAD
TRACK
INTERNAT. BOUNDARY
MTN. PASS
MTN. PEAK ×
HEIGHTS IN FEET
DARJEELING
INDIA
RET

Figure 19. Physical Features of Sikkim.

The most important pass is Natu La, less than 30 miles northeast of Gangtok. With an elevation of approximately 14,200 feet, it is on the most practical land route from the Chumbi Valley to the plains of India. A secondary pass, about 5 miles south of Natu La, is Jelep La, with an elevation of 14,390 feet. The trail through it crosses some high mountains before reaching Kalimpong in India. Minor passes include Patra La, elevation 14,240 feet, about 25 miles north of Natu La; Ta-Chi La, elevation 17,393 feet, near the upper reaches of the Lachung River, in the northeast; and the Chorten Nyima La, elevation 18,500 feet, in the northwestern corner of the country.

Sikkim has more than 20 mountain peaks rising about 20,000 feet. By far the most renowned is Kanchenjunga, elevation 28,208 feet—the third highest peak in the world. Situated in the northwestern part of the country astride the boundary with Nepal, Kanchenjunga is generally regarded by the Sikkimese as a sacred mountain. Besides being the subject of numerous legends and providing the inspiration for many artists and writers, it evokes emotions among the Sikkimese as does Mount Everest among the Nepalese. Within 10 miles on either side of Kanchenjunga are two other majestic peaks: on the north, Tent Peak at 24,165 feet; on the south, Kabru at 24,075 feet. The highest peak on the eastern range is Pauhunri, elevation 23,385 feet, 5 miles southeast of Ta-Chi La pass.

Ridges and spurs from the enveloping mountains define the drainage pattern. From the crest of the Himalayan range rise the Lachung River in the northeast and the Lachen River in the northwest. In their southward course they join at Chuntang to form the Tista River, which with its tributaries drains virtually the entire country. It plunges southward some 40 miles before entering India through a deep narrow gorge southwest of the border town of Rangpo, eventually joining the Brahmaputra in East Pakistan. The principal tributaries of the Tista are the Rangpo in the southeast and the Rangit in the southwest. None of the rivers are navigable, but some have potentialities as sources of hydroelectric power.

Natural resources remain largely unexplored and undeveloped. Deposits of copper, found in many places but particularly in the Rangpo area southwest of Gangtok, have been worked by primitive methods for more than a century. Other mineral findings include coal (in sizable quantities), graphite, gypsum, tin, zinc, aluminum, lead, iron ore (in small quantities), silver and gold.

Vegetation types and densities depend largely on elevation and soil availability. More than half the country is too barren and rocky for any vegetation except brush and grasses sufficient to support yak herds and wild sheep. In the extreme south, rain forests lush with tropical plant life are found in some of the narrow river valleys at elevations ranging from 700 to about 3,000 feet above sea level. Farther north, particularly at elevations between 9,000 and 12,000 feet, are vast areas of untapped woodland in which oak and birch generally predominate. Various species of fir, chestnut and rhododendron are also found.

The monsoonal alternation of wet and dry seasons characteristic of the general area is complicated by the topography, particularly of slopes, exposure and altitude. The basic pattern is determined by the moisture-laden southerly winds blowing in from the Bay of Bengal, bringing the heaviest rains from about May to November. In general the climate is characterized as tropical at elevations up to 3,500 feet; temperate from 3,500 to 12,000 feet; and alpine from 12,000 feet to the permanent snowline, which begins in some areas at around 16,000 feet. Based on incomplete records, the average annual rainfall is said to be about 137 inches in Gangtok, and as high as 200 inches each year on the south-facing slopes of mountains up to 8,000 feet.

HISTORY

Of the three main ethnic groups, the Lepcha were the first established in the area. Nothing certain is known about their time of arrival, but it is commonly believed they were Sikkim's original inhabitants. Lepcha settlements were encountered in the early fourteenth century by the Bhota when they began coming into the country from eastern Tibet, the largest influx moving southwestward through the Chumbi Valley (now in Tibet) across the 14,200-foot Natu La pass, and on to various points along the Tista River and its tributaries. A smaller number pushed across the still higher passes on the northern frontier.

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the newly arrived Bhote readily gained ascendancy over the less sophisticated local people. Some Bhote established themselves on the land and built up large estates. Others devoted themselves to the propagation of Tibetan Lamaism among the animist Lepcha, succeeding in converting many of them to the Buddhist faith. Of the lamas engaged in missionary endeavors in this period, those who were to play a major role in the nation's history congregated at Yoksam on the Rangit River, a tributary of the Tista River in the southwestern region.

In the mid-seventeenth century several of the chief monks at Yoksam, realizing the need for a formal government structure in Sikkim, established a wealthy Bhote from Gangtok as ruler of a Lamaistic theocratic state. He was Phuntso (Phunshog, Penshoo) Namgyal, a seventh-generation descendant of a Tibetan nobleman, who according to legend was helped to this position in fulfillment of a sacred prophecy. The coronation took place in 1642 at Yoksam. Shortly thereafter the newly crowned Maharaja appointed 12 Bhote and 12 Lepcha as civil officials and gave them large tracts of land; they were the forebears of Sikkim's nobility, later called *kazi.* Lamaist monasteries and shrines multiplied throughout the countryside and Buddhist emigrants not only from Tibet but from eastern Nepal entered the country in increasing numbers.

Cordial relations with the Dalai Lama V in Lhasa were quickly established, developing in later years to the point that Sikkim, whose royal family customarily intermarried with Tibetan nobility, became a virtual dependency of its neighbor to the north. This relationship continued until well into the nineteenth century, during most of which time Tibet itself was under suzerainty of the Chinese empire.

The boundaries of the country, fixed at the time of Phuntso Namgyal's coronation, extended beyond their present outlines on the east across the Chumbi Valley to the Ha Valley of Bhutan; on the south to the plains of India just below Darjeeling and Kalimpong; and on the west across the Ilam province of Nepal. During the eighteenth century, however, Sikkim was attacked first from the east, later from the west, and lost much of its territory. The Bhutanese invaders struck during the reign of the third Maharaja, Chakdor (Chagdor) Namgyal, who ascended the throne in 1700. Having occupied the country and forced the Maharaja to flee to Lhasa, they were eventually expelled with Tibetan help but by terms of the settlement allowed to retain the Kalimpong area. The Bhutanese attacked again in 1780, but this time were turned back. Greater losses were suffered as a result of the Gorkha invasion of the late eighteenth century, when the Nepalese conquerors seized the entire western and southern portions of Sikkim up to the banks of the Tista River.

At the close of the Anglo-Nepalese war (1814–16), the government of British India returned this territory (exclusive of Ilam) to Sikkim, an act which marked the start of effective British influence in the area. In 1839, however, Sikkim was forced to cede the Darjeeling district to the East India Company, in return for which Great Britain provided an annual subsidy to the Maharaja of IR3,000. Trade and commercial relations between the two countries shortly thereafter produced friction, aggravated in 1849 by the arbitrary imprisonment of two British citizens who had been traveling in Sikkim.

To safeguard its interests the Government of British India in 1861 imposed the Treaty of Tumlong, under which Sikkim was forced to recognize British authority and responsibility in its internal and foreign affairs. The annual subsidy, withheld since 1850, was restored. However, the situation was not to the liking of the Maharaja, who in 1886 sent a plea for support to the Chinese resident in Lhasa. In response a small Tibetan force was dispatched to Sikkim, where it established fortifications in the southeastern region near the Jelep La pass. These troops continued to harass the British until finally driven out in 1888.

Soon afterward China capitulated on the matter of British supremacy in Sikkim and signed a convention at Calcutta in 1890 confirming the British protectorate there; further, it agreed in 1893 to a supplementary treaty on trade and internal matters. This accomplished, the British appointed an Indian political officer and a council composed of civil officials and lamas to assist the Maharaja in dealing with affairs of state. The Maharaja fled, later dying in exile. He was succeeded in 1914 by his son, who succumbed in 1918, and was followed on the throne by his half brother, Tashi Namgyal, father of the present Maharaja. The annual subsidy, which had been forfeited in 1889, was resumed.

Under British domination Sikkim experienced a period of peace and political stability. A few roads were built, a temporary hospital was constructed, and initial measures were taken to develop the economy. But the mass of the people continued to have little or no opportunity for schooling. A major change in the character of the population occurred with the sudden influx, beginning about 1870, of predominantly Hindu immigrants from adjacent areas of eastern Nepal.

In 1947, India assumed the British protectorate, a status confirmed by a treaty of December 1950, when an Indian civil official was appointed to assist the Maharaja.

THE PEOPLE

Persons of Nepalese origin make up an estimated 65 to 80 percent of the population. The remainder is comprised largely of Bhote, some Lepcha and a few strongly Indian-influenced groups on the southern frontier, such as the Tharu (Mechi subgroup), Dhimal and Rajbansi. None of these ethnic groups is found exclusively within the borders of Sikkim. The Lepcha, for example, are also found in eastern Nepal, the Darjeeling district of West Bengal in India and in western Bhutan. The Dhimal, Rajbansi, and Tharu (Mechi) are also found in the Tarai regions of Nepal and India.

As in Nepal these varied ethnic communities fall into two large groupings on the basis of cultural orientation: those influenced by Tibetan culture and those influenced by Indian culture. Within the Tibetan-oriented group, besides the Bhote and Lepcha, are a few Buddhist Nepalese, including Tamang, Sherpa and the *tshong,* descendants of the Magar, Limbu and Gurung groups who settled in Sikkim as early as the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Indian-oriented group, by far the larger, is made up almost exclusively of persons of recent Nepalese extraction whose forebears entered Sikkim mainly within the past century. They are Hindus and belong predominantly to the Rai ethnic group, although Newar and Pahari (particularly of the Chetri caste) are present.

Nepali is spoken with varying degrees of fluency by nearly everyone.

It is the common medium of communication not only among the Nepalese but also between them and the Bhote and Lepcha, each of which has a native tongue of its own. Den-jong-ke, the language of the Bhote, is a dialect of Tibetan and is spoken in the Ha Valley of Bhutan and the Chumbi Valley of Tibet as well as in Sikkim. It belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family, as perhaps does Rong-ke, the language of the Lepcha. Both Den-jong-ke and Nepali are used in official communications with local administrative centers, but Nepali is the standard medium in instruction in the schools. The use of English however is being encouraged by the Maharaja.

Although close social contacts between Lepcha and Bhote have been limited largely to the upper class, relations between the two groups have been generally harmonious. Lepcha have always been represented in the government and have been fully admitted to the lower ranks of the Buddhist clergy. A few have become abbots. The Lepcha, moreover, have adopted many elements of Bhote culture. Their house-type, costume, language, customs and agricultural practices have been strongly influenced by the Bhote, whom Lepcha regard as socially superior. Only in a few solidly Lepcha villages and on an estate belonging to the Maharaja which has been set aside as a Lepcha reservation have they retained much of their old culture. Although intermarriage between the Bhote and Lepcha does occur, both groups tend to marry predominantly within their own ethnic groups, and neither intermarries with the Hindu Nepalese settlers.

Considerable discord has existed between the Hindu Nepalese settlers and the Bhote and Lepcha. The Nepalese tend to feel that the government does not adequately represent their interests as the largest element in the population and resent the discrimination practiced against them. Napalese settlers traditionally have not been allowed to become village headmen and for some time have been forbidden by law to settle north of the Dikchu River, above Gangtok. They can apply for citizenship only after 15 years' residence, and their citizenship can be revoked at any time by the Maharaja for disloyalty to or dissatisfaction with the monarch.

Bhote, Lepcha and Nepalese are all patrilineally organized and are frequently found in extended family households. They differ, however, in many respects in the details of both domestic groups and the larger kinship system. Among both Bhote and Lepcha, for example, most marriages apparently are monogamous; a few are polyandrous, still fewer polygynous. A Bhote or Lepcha man rarely has more than one wife, but among the Nepalese polygamy is fairly common.

The Bhote and Lepcha must ordinarily perform bride service—that is, work for their father-in-law for a period of time—as well as pay a large bride-price as part of the marriage arrangements, neither of which is done by the Nepalese. While performing bride service the Bhote husband usually lives with the bride's family, whereas the Lepcha husband remains with his own.

The principle of equal inheritance is apparently followed by most Bhote and Lepcha, although one of the sons may be treated preferentially. In at least one Lepcha clan, however, the family estate is shared jointly by all sons. To prevent fragmentation of an estate a group of brothers sometimes will share a common wife, thereby retaining joint ownership of the family property. When there are no sons, a man is taken into the family to become the common husband of all of its unmarried daughters.

The Lepcha are organized into large patrilineal clans (*ptso*) which still retain to some degree their individual association with specific areas of Sikkim, although the movement of families to new areas has somewhat blurred this localization of the clan, particularly in the larger villages. The Bhote, on the other hand, seem to lack such large kinship groups; Bhote families sharing the same family name are not necessarily relatives. Not only is descent not traced past grandparents, but many of these family names merely indicate the geographic origin of the families bearing them and do not imply even remote kinship.

RELIGION

Probably only about one-third of the people are adherents of Tibetan or Lamaist Buddhism, the state religion. The remainder are Hindus who undoubtedly have retained the beliefs and practices that characterize the popular religion of their caste or ethnic group in Nepal, including their own form of shamanism.

The Buddhist clergy of Sikkim belong to the "Red Hat" orders of monks who are followers of Padmasambhava, the great teacher of the Vajrayana school who was responsible for the initial conversion of the Tibetans to Buddhism. Of the three orders of Red Hat monks, the Kagyutpa, Nyingmapa and Sakyapa, the Kagyutpa has the largest representation in Sikkim; its principal, the Gyalwa Karmapa Lama, fled Tibet after the 1950 invasion by the Chinese Communists and now lives at a monastery near Gangtok.

The present Maharaja, Palden Thondup Namgyal, is a strong supporter of the faith, deeply interested in preserving its cultural and moral influence on the life of the country. In October 1958 he founded the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology at Gangtok, with the aim of promoting research in and knowledge of Buddhism, particularly in its Tibetan form. He is also president of the Mahabodhi Society, an Indian organization devoted to the propagation of Buddhism.

Although the high-ranking members of the Buddhist clergy no longer officially assist and advise the Maharaja as they once did, they continue to receive some financial support from the government. The 35 major *gompa,* or monasteries, receive small annual stipends from the state treasury. Part of their expenses and all those of smaller *gompa,* however, are met by the villages they serve.

A parish representative periodically visits each household to collect donations of cash or produce. Households wishing to have private services conducted for them are moreover expected to pay a fee which varies with the ecclesiastical rank of the lama. Buddhist villagers of a parish additionally provide 15 days of uncompensated labor per household each year toward the maintenance of the *gompa,* and during the major festivals certain households take turns providing food and drink for all the lamas.

When living and working as tenant farmers or laborers in Bhote and Lepcha villages, Hindus may, like their neighbors, make contributions of produce or labor to the *gompa* and in the absence of Brahmans may retain lamas to conduct occasional private religious services. As Hindus they are seldom as liberal and frequent in making donations as the Bhote and Lepcha, for whom contributions to the *gompa* constitute a heavy financial burden.

The Sikkimese *gompa* consists of a temple used solely for worship purposes and a few smaller buildings in which the lamas live during the major seasonal festivals, and to which they retreat for the rainy season (May to October), when ordained monks are expected to withdraw from the world for a period of meditation and contemplation. At other times of the year lamas reside in their own homes. Those few whose houses are closest to the monastery manage its routine daily affairs. Each village usually has its own *gompa,* often quite small and simple, but affiliated to one of the major *gompa,* each of which has jurisdiction over a number of villages in a circumscribed area or parish from which it draws support.

The Lepcha, although converted to Buddhism by the Bhote, did not abandon their earlier shamanistic beliefs in the spirits of various mountains, particularly Kanchenjunga, near which they believe their ancestors dwell. Instead, their earlier beliefs and traditions became intermingled with and reinterpreted in the light of Tibetan Buddhism.

Influences from the shamanism of other ethnic groups have also been felt. Thus, there are similarities to the Bon religion of Tibet, which entered the country with Lamaism as it did in Nepal. The Lepcha have several types of shaman, depending on whether the shaman is possessed by a Lepcha, Tibetan or Limbu deity or spirit. Both men and women may be shamans, and the office is inherited, a member of the shaman's family being chosen by the spirits to follow him or her. As in Nepal, the shaman appeases malign deities, offers worship to benevolent gods, diagnoses and cures illnesses, practices divination and sorcery, and conducts rituals at the important crises of Lepcha life, such as birth, marriage and death.

In the traditional social order, status was primarily determined by birth, and only secondarily by personal achievement. The nobility (*kazi*), who held large feudal estates in fief from the ruler, were a hereditary aristocracy distinguished not only by their privileged economic position but by their almost exclusive access to political power under the supreme authority of the king. The *kazi* made up the traditional bureaucracy and, within their own domains, exercised complete administrative, military and judicial control. Below them were the stewards, who acted for the *kazi* in the management of their estates, a few commoners to whom the king had given title to small portions of land in return for services rendered, and the mass of peasant cultivators on the estates of the *kazi*. The only path to higher status open to these persons was that provided by the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Among his peers the ordinary man achieved respect primarily by his own efforts and skills, influenced by his personality and good character. Generosity in supporting the monasteries and in conducting the festivities associated with the important events of life such as weddings and funerals was one of the significant values of the society. Ownership of animals and land was also important in conferring prestige.

The traditional order was somewhat weakened by the large-scale influx of Hindu Nepalese settlers after 1870, although until the mid-twentieth century the essential pattern remained intact. In political and social terms the hereditary nobility remained in a preeminent position. The monopoly of the *kazi* on economic power, however, was increasingly challenged by the Nepalese, many of whom, although they had entered Sikkim with only meager resources, managed to acquire property by dint of hard work and careful savings. A substantial minority of this group were able to buy small farms of their own; a few amassed considerable wealth in the form of large landholdings.

The immigration of large numbers of Nepalese not part of the traditional society, the redistribution of land in the post-World War II period, and efforts to modernize the country have wrought major changes in the society. New social groupings and new social values have emerged and the society itself has shifted from one based on ascribed status to one more oriented toward achievement.

Culturally and ethnically Sikkim remains divided into two societies—the Buddhist Bhote-Lepcha community, in which the Bhote enjoy higher status, and the Hindu Nepalese. Social intercourse between the two is largely limited to formal contacts such as those bringing together landlord and tenant, merchant and customer. Intermarriage never occurs.

Nevertheless the existence of a common national government, a developing national economy and the geographic unity of the country make it possible to put the two communities together in a single scheme of socioeconomic stratification. Because the criteria of this graduation do not entirely correspond with those ordinarily applied by Sikkimese in ranking one another, the framework, in terms of self-identification, may scarcely exist. The caste system of the Hindus and the special position of the Buddhist clergy, for example, are not taken into consideration.

At the peak of the social pyramid are the Maharaja and his relatives. Below them in the elite are the *kazi* who control the higher government positions, wealthy Nepalese who once were large landowners, and a number of businessmen of varying ethnic origins.

A middle group is composed of the Indian Marwari caste of moneylenders, wealthy Bhote caravaneers and stockbreeders, the bulk of civil servants, shopkeepers—both Indian and Nepalese—and some of the more prosperous peasant farmers of all ethnic groups. The bulk of the population are small landowning peasant farmers; lowest in the scale are tenant farmers, day laborers and porters.

On the local scene ownership of land continues to define socioeconomic position and to confer prestige, although it no longer is an attribute of privileged status as it was before 1951 when all large landholdings except those of the Maharaja and the five principal monasteries were redistributed to peasant cultivators. Particularly among the Bhote, herds of yak, long- and short-horn cattle and mules are an important form of wealth, in some areas more significant than private ownership of land.

Another important social change has to do with the significance now attached to Western education. In contrast to earlier practice such schooling has become as important as, and in some cases more important than, birth in staffing government positions. The Nepalese Hindu immigrants, not sharing the values of the traditional Buddhist society, have been more active in seizing the opportunities opened by modern education and an expanding economy than have the average Bhote or Lepcha.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

At the time India assumed the British protectorate of Sikkim in 1947, the level of medical, health and sanitary facilities in the country was low. Communicable and other diseases were widespread, pure water supplies were almost nowhere available and modern medical care reached only a small fraction of the people. There were only 3 small hospitals, one in Gangtok with 64 beds, the others in Singtam about 10 miles southwest of Gangtok, and at Namchi some 20 miles southwest of the capital near the Indian border. These had 6 and 16 beds, respectively. Besides this there were 7 dispensaries, all in the southern part of the country.

Since 1954, when a development program financed and largely administered by India was put into effect, some improvement in public health has been brought about. Many persons have been inoculated against smallpox and tuberculosis and large parts of the highly malarious southern region of Sikkim have been covered by spraying teams. A maternal and child-care wing has been added at the main hospital in Gangtok and another hospital and some 15 new dispensaries built. A few young persons have been sent to India to train for the staffs of these new institutions.

More effective, however, have been efforts to extend educational opportunities to larger numbers of Sikkimese children. Literacy has been increased from less than 5 percent in 1950 to about 13 percent, and enrollment in the country's roughly 150 schools has reached 7,200, more than double those under the British. To improve the caliber of teaching, a training institute has been established at Temi in the southwest. The opening in 1957 of a Cottage Industries Institute in Gangtok has provided an opportunity for about 60 young women each year to learn various handicraft skills. In addition, substantial numbers of young persons have been sent to Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Calcutta for training. Some had won Indian Government scholarships; others were studying at private expense.

Despite this growth in educational opportunity, modern schooling still failed to reach the majority of Sikkimese children, and those whom it did reach were in many instances taught by ill-prepared instructors handicapped by lack of books and equipment. Because of differing attitudes toward education, the principal beneficiaries of the educational reform were the Nepalese; interest in secular schooling among the Bhote and Lepcha was limited almost entirely to the upper class. Most Bhote and Lepcha continued to favor traditional forms of learning and sent their most promising male children to monasteries for training, hoping to see them eventually become part of the economically secure and respected Buddhist clergy.

Apart from the needs of Sikkim's permanent population, the government has been confronted with the necessity of providing social services for more than 7,000 Tibetan refugees who fled to Sikkim after the takeover of their country by Communist China. Camps and schools were set up and India physicians brought in to provide medical care. Efforts were made to make the refugees self-supporting by employing them in road construction work, but they were herdsmen and farmers by training and few were able to accommodate themselves to this work. Recognizing that their presence was an enormous economic and social burden on Sikkim, India agreed in 1961 to take the bulk of the refugees. By mid-1964, nearly all had emigrated to India, leaving behind only a few hundred for whom food and shelter had to be provided.

Even more critical than the need for schools, dispensaries and hospitals has been that of building up a formal communications network and a modern system of roads, neither of which existed at the time the development program was put into effect. News traveled almost exclusively by word of mouth, except in Gangtok, where a few Indian periodicals were brought in; only one motorable road, running from Gangtok south to Rangpo on the Indian border, linked the country with the outside world.

The Maharaja and the Indian officials concerned with Sikkimese affairs fully realized the urgency of modernizing the country's communications and transport facilities and this became one of the chief problems attacked under the Indian-supported economic development program.

THE ECONOMY

Land Use

Land use is largely determined by altitude and rainfall. Elevations range from 700 feet above sea level in the Tista Valley in the south to over 20,000 feet in the main Himalayan range in the north. The rainfall varies from 200 inches on the windward slopes to 60 inches on the leeward side. Nearly all occurs during the monsoon season from May through October. Land under cultivation is found is mountain valleys and on the slopes of the hills up to 7,500 feet, but most of it is located in the warm, moist valley bottom of the south, where an extended monsoon and heavy rainfall make it possible to raise two or three crops a year. Farther north the land is covered with extensive belts of forest, and beyond 9,000 feet an alpine tundra stretches to 13,500 feet where the permanent snow cover begins. Of some 3 million acres it is estimated that about 8 percent is cultivated and about 15 percent forested. The barren alpine region which supports only yak herds and wild sheep accounts for more than half the remainder. The rest of the country's land area is covered by perpetual snow.

Land Tenure

Only the Maharaja and five large monasteries retained their extensive landholdings after the land reforms of 1951. At that time other holdings were purchased by the government and distributed to farmers, who received ownership rights to land for which they had previously held usage rights only. Rents are collected directly by government officials. Tenants on the larges estates and the sublet farms are of two kinds. Some pay fixed amounts either in cash or kind; others pay a percentage of harvested products. Contracts are made with the owner, usually for 1 year. Since 1951 landlords have been required to give receipts for rent payments to tenants, who can be evicted only by legal process.

To safeguard the interests of the Bhote, Lepcha and *tshong,* the government has not only denied the Nepalese the right of ownership or residence north of Dikchu, but has also established protective measures for these groups with respect to rent for tenancy. Whereas a Nepalese must pay one-fifth of the harvest for a paddy field, the Bhote and the Lepcha are required to pay only one-eighth.

Forests at altitudes over 6,600 feet are generally designated "reserved forests" and are government owned. At lower elevations forests are owned by individuals or communities, with few restrictions on their exploitation by their owners.

Agriculture

Agriculture is characterized by small, terraced fields, primitive implements and much manual labor. It is markedly influenced by the climate, which varies from tropical at lower elevations in the south to arctic in the high peaks of the main Himalayan range in the north. Of approximately 250,000 acres under cultivation, 30,000 acres are irrigated, mostly in the Tista Valley where the chief ricelands are located. Both wet and dry farming are practiced. Staple cereals, such as rice, corn, wheat, buckwheat and barley, are the main crops. The average yield is low and total production insufficient to feed the population. Corn and rice lead in acreage but cardamon, an herb of the ginger family, citrus fruits, apples and pineapples produced for export in the warm southern valleys are also important. Potatoes, a major cash crop, are grown at altitudes between 5,000 and 6,000 feet. Sheep, goats, cattle, yaks and mules are numerous; at higher elevations animals rather than crops support the population. Besides supplying local needs, the flocks furnish wool, skins, hides and meat.

A Department of Agriculture established in 1955 is carrying out an extensive program to improve agricultural practices and to increase yields. Improved seeds have been distributed, and the use of fertilizers and plant protection methods introduced. Three demonstration farms have been set up: one at 3,000 feet near Gangtok, another at Lachung in the northeast for the study of high-altitude crops and a potato farm at Temi in western Sikkim. The Department also maintains two cardamom nurseries at Gangtok and Rongli, a nursery for subtropical fruits near Gangtok and an apple orchard at Lachung. The development of an agricultural extension service which will provide an extension worker in each district throughout the country is an important feature of the Five-Year Plan (1962–67).

Animal Husbandry

Animals are of great importance in the economy. Almost all farmers have cattle and poultry. Bullocks are used to pull the plow and the cart. The Bhote, animal breeders more than farmers, raise long- and short-horned cattle and yaks; the lower floor of the two-storied Bhote house is both barn and granary. All have horses and mules because they are also occupied with the transport of goods along mountain trails. Flocks are driven in the summer to higher pastures, where the herdsmen live in tents made of felt or thick woolen cloth. The Lapcha, also animal breeders, maintain long-horned cattle, swine, goats, sheep and poultry. Many engage more in cattle marketing than in farming.

In an effort to improve the local strains of livestock the Department of Agriculture in 1956 imported a herd of Jersey cattle and a number of pigs and installed them in a new dairy farm at Gangtok. Their progeny, to be crossed with indigenous strains, have been distributed free of charge among villagers. A chicken farm has also been started and selected breeds supplied to farmers at subsidized rates; the veterinary dispensary at Gangtok has been enlarged and its facilities expanded.

Forestry

Forests rich in softwoods and hardwoods constitute one of Sikkim's greatest assets. The finest of them lie in the northernmost regions of Lachen and Lachung, where exploitation has been difficult because transportation facilities are lacking. In the lower ranges and valleys, apart from what is left of the dense original forest, are valuable plantations of sal, simal and bamboo. The northern forests are reserved, but the southern forests to the east and west of the heavily cultivated area provide valuable timber for export, fuel and building materials for domestic use, and grazing for animals. The Department of Forests has the threefold task of stopping indiscriminate felling of trees, planting of areas subject to erosion, and carrying on a full-scale regeneration program in order to preserve the timber wealth of the country.

Gathering, Hunting and Fishing

Many valuable roots, barks, plants and seeds can be gathered in the forests, but the most important is cardamom, the seeds of which are exported to flavor curry powder and bread, cakes and cookies. Many Lepcha became rich as a result of gathering natural cardamom, which grows like a weed, sometimes up to 12 feet.

Although they are now engaged in farming and stockbreeding, the Lepcha also hunt and fish, and their traditional occupation of hunting still plays a considerable role in their lives. Birds, deer, bears and wild boar are the usual objects of their arrows and snares. The once extensive hunting of elephants and rhinoceros is now rare because of a religious ban on killing these animals. Four types of bows are used. Arrows are made of reed and bamboo, tipped with iron, and dipped in aconite, a sedative extract. Limbu in the western part of the country are also hunters but little is known of their practices.

Fishing is a part-time occupation among Lepcha living near mountain streams, where nets or bamboo traps are used, or the water is poisoned. Fish are usually caught jointly by a group and the catch divided equally among them.

Minerals, Power, Industries and Handicrafts

Sikkim has extensive deposits of copper and coal; it is believed that the geological survey being carried out by India may reveal other industrial and precious minerals in commercial quantities. Copper has been mined since 1875. The most promising mine is at Bhotang, where reserves are estimated at 41,000 tons. Sikkim and India are planning a large-scale, joint exploitation of this mine. Other copper mines are located at Dikchu, about 20 miles northwest of Gangtok, and at several other sites. Coal deposits occur in an area of 40 to 50 square miles in the Rangit Valley. Reserves are estimated at 240 million tons of noncoking coal suitable for domestic consumption. The West Bengal Government is considering the building of a ropeway to transport coal from this field if deposits are found to warrant the expenditures.

Sikkim has a waterpower potential estimated at 1.2 million kilowatts but until 1960 had only one small hydroelectric power station, built in the 1920's and capable of supplying Gangtok with electricity for 12 hours each day. In 1961 the Rangli hydroelectric project generating 2,100 kilowatts of electricity was completed, making it possible to plan for the establishment of small industries. Four other small hydroelectric plants are being built at Mangen, on the Tista River about 10 miles north of Dikchu, Gezing on the Rangit River, Namchi and Naya Bazar. It is hoped that Sikkim's rivers can be harnessed not only for domestic industry but also for the export of power to India (see fig. 20).

Industry is represented by two small plants, a fruit processing factory at Singtam and a distillery near Rangpo. Handicraft production, however, is highly developed and most consumer goods and tools are produced by artisans and craftsmen. The Cottage Industries Institute at Gangtok was established to encourage local handicrafts, such as carpetmaking, weaving, traditional religious painting, embroidery and papiermache work.

Trade and Transport

Since November 1962, when a state of emergency was declared and the Tibetan border closed, trade has been almost entirely with India. Prior to the border closure Sikkim carried on considerable trade with Tibet and its termination has been a severe blow. The principal imports from Tibet were yaks, wool and salt; Sikkim supplied handmade clothing and utensils. Even more important to Sikkim was the Indian-Tibetan trade, mainly channeled over the Kalimpong-Gangtok-Natu La pass to

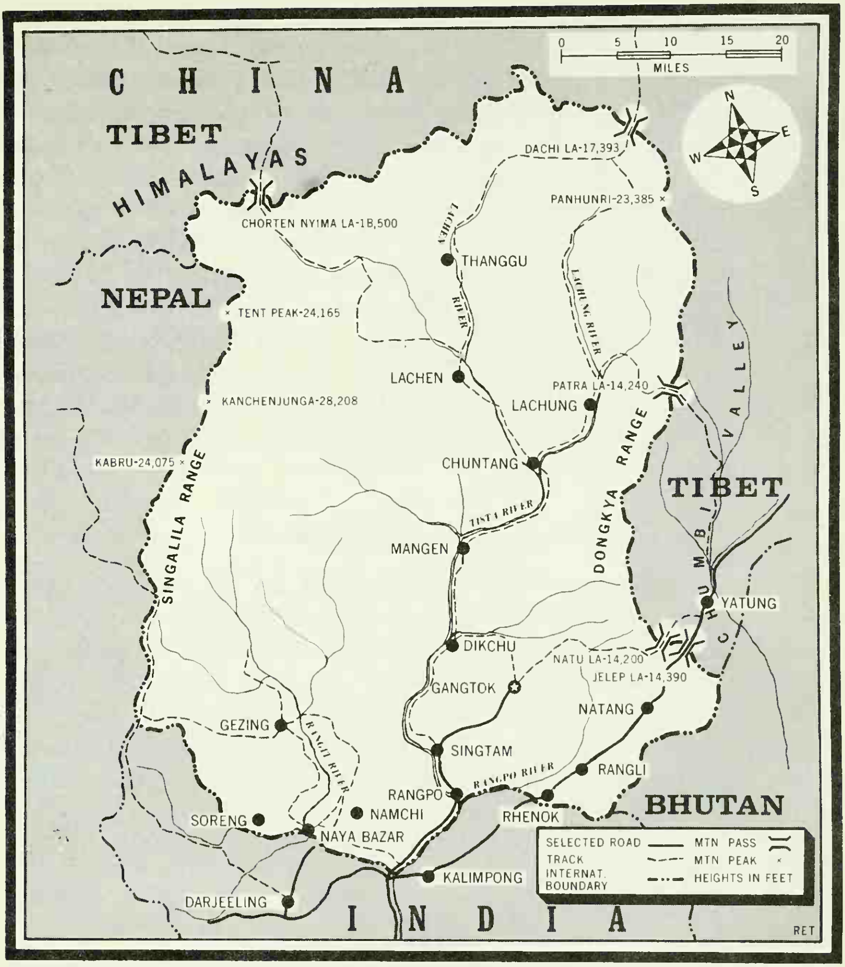
CHINA
TIBET
HIMALAYAS
NEPAL
0 5 10 15 20
MILES
N
E
W
S
DACHI LA-17,393
PANHUNRI-23,385 ×
CHORTEN NYIMA LA-18,500
LACHEN RIVER
THANGGU
× TENT PEAK-24,165
LACHUNG RIVER
LACHEN
PATRA LA-14,240
LACHUNG
× KANCHENJUNGA-28,208
KABRU-24,075 ×
CHUNTANG
SINGALILA RANGE
DONGKYA RANGE
CHUMBI VALLEY
TIBET
TISTA RIVER
MANGEN
YATUNG
DIKCHU
NATU LA-14,200
JELEP LA-14,390
GANGTOK
NATANG
GEZING
RANGIT RIVER
SINGTAM
RANGLI
RANGPO RIVER
RANGPO
NAMCHI
RHENOK
BHUTAN
SORENG
NAYA BAZAR
SELECTED ROAD
TRACK
INTERNAT. BOUNDARY
MTN PASS
MTN PEAK ×
HEIGHTS IN FEET
KALIMPONG
DARJEELING
INDIA
RET

Figure 20. Sikkim.

the Chumbi Valley in Tibet. Exports from India into Tibet—articles of every description, from rice to radios—had to be carried much of the way by mule, caravan and porter. Sikkim exports apples, oranges, lumber and other forest products such as medicinal herbs and spices to India, and imports machinery, steel, cement, rice, wheat and cotton fabrics.

Gangtok is the center of trade. Galleried shops along the main thoroughfare sell a wide variety of imported goods, and on market day people from the surrounding countryside bring vegetables, fruits, meat, fish and butter to the new, modern market. In other parts of the country, villagers who generally live in detached homesteads congregate every week at a central market to buy and sell the necessities of life.

Gangtok's commercial importance has grown as the country's road system has expanded. In 1951, Sikkim had one motorable road running from Rangpo on the Indian border and stopping at Gangtok; only a few trails were passable by pack animals, the others being usable only by porters. Since 1958 about 500 miles of vehicular roads have been built. The road from Gangtok to Natu La pass was completed, as well as the northern Sikkim arterial road which enables villagers to send their produce to markets in northern India by truck instead of by porter or mule. Another road to the formerly inaccessible northern part of the country and an alternate highway to Gangtok from India via Pakhyong are under construction. The ropeway from India to Gangtok, completed in 1958, supplements other freight carriers. The nearest railroad station is at Siliguri, about 50 miles from Gangtok; the nearest airport is at Baghdogra, also in West Bengal. Both are connected with Gangtok by a bus and truck service operated by the Sikkim National Transport Company.

The Two Development Plans

Most of the advances in Sikkim's economy are the result of its two development plans, both financed by India. Expenditure under the Seven-Year Plan, dating from 1954, totaled IR34 million. About half was spent on communications and transportation; the remainder on agriculture, minor irrigation projects and rural development, power and industry, and social services. The Five-Year Plan, (Sikkim's second plan) began on April 1, 1962, calling for the expenditure of IR82 million on further modernization of the country. An IR25-million project to develop copper resources, a joint Sikkimese-Indian enterprise, is outside the plan.

POLITICS

Government

Since emerging as a state in 1642 the country has been ruled autocratically by a king, commonly called the Maharaja. His absolute powers were curtailed in 1861, when the Government of British India under the Treaty of Tumlong formally established a protectorate and assumed control of foreign relations.

To check a growing spirit of resistance against their controls, the British in 1890 appointed a political officer to reside in Gangtok and assist the Maharaja in administering governmental affairs through a *durbar,* or council, composed of the chief civil officials and lamas. This general restriction on the Maharaja's powers continued until 1918, when Sir Tashi Namgyal, after prolonged negotiations, was vested by the British with autonomy over internal affairs.

Further changes developed soon after the Government of India took over the British protectorate in 1947. In view of the threat imposed by the entry of Chinese Communist forces in Tibet in 1950, Indian authorities felt the need for even greater assurance of close cooperation from the Sikkimese Government than was accorded the British. The new relationships were formalized in 1950 by the Indo-Sikkim Treaty in which India undertook the responsibility for Sikkim's foreign affairs, territorial defense and strategic communications. The British political officer, responsible also for Bhutan since 1904, was replaced by an Indian incumbent. Furthermore, the Indian administration added a *dewan* who, with functions similar to those of a prime minister, acted as the Maharaja's chief adviser.

Early in the 1950's the Maharaja began experimenting with several types of advisory bodies. By proclamation of March 23, 1953, he established the State Council and the Executive Council, which with minor modifications continue to be the central elements of the new governmental structure. Despite the presence of various Indian officials and advisers on political, technical and other special matters, the Maharaja retains supreme authority over internal affairs.

The State Council, as initially formed, was composed of 17 members: 12 elected by universal suffrage organized on a communal basis (with 6 members representing the Nepalese and 6 the Bhote-Lepcha segments of the population) and 5 members appointed by the Maharaja. The minimum age for candidates is 30 years and for voters, 21 years.

As of mid-1963 the Council, presided over by the *dewan* or a person designated by the Maharaja, met twice a year or whenever the Maharaja saw fit. Its members held office for 5 years from the date of their first meeting after election. Issues were decided by majority vote of members present, with the Maharaja voting in case of a tie.

The Council was empowered to enact laws pertaining to internal affairs, but the Maharaja's prior approval was required before it was able to consider any legislation affecting state enterprises, land revenues, or religious, police and financial matters. Specifically forbidden were deliberations relating to the ruling family, to any matters pending before a court or to relations with India and other foreign countries.

The Executive Council, primarily an advisory body, all of whose members are appointed by the Maharaja, was composed initially of certain elected members of the State Council. The *dewan* is permanent chairman, but the Maharaja can veto any of the Council's decisions and substitute one of his own. Members serve at his pleasure and are directly responsible to him for their executive functions and to the State Council for their administrative functions. Council members exercise any powers that may be delegated to them by the Maharaja, but each normally heads the administration of one or more specific departments, including Education, Public Health, Public Works, Taxes and Licenses, Press, Transport, Forests and Bazaars.

The changes in governmental organization and procedures since 1950 have been in the nature of adjustments in response to internal political pressures and to external tensions, particularly those induced by the disputes between neighboring India and Communist China. By 1958 communal representation on the State Council had been somewhat broadened by the addition of three members, one elected by all the voters at large, one selected by the lamas from those monasteries recognized by the ruling family, and the third appointed by the Maharaja.

The first general elections in Sikkimese history were held during 1952 and 1953, but the electorate was politically immature and only about 40 percent voted. In the second elections, held late in 1958, demands for a constitutional monarchy and relaxation of Indian controls became major issues. The third general elections, scheduled for 1962, were postponed a year because of the continued state of emergency which, following India's example, had been declared on November 13, 1962, after Communist China's aggressions into Assam on the eastern, and Ladakh on the western, Himalayan border of India.

As of the beginning of 1964, the State Council has been dissolved since the expiration of its term in 1963. During the emergency it is replaced by a "People's Consultative Committee" and the Executive Council is reduced to four members. Moreover, the Indian *dewan* has, by mutual agreement, been replaced by an Indian "principal administrative officer" who heads the Consultative Committee and the Executive Council.

The Maharaja

The country's most prominent leader is Maharaja Palden Thondup Namgyal, ruler since the death of his father, Sir Tashi Namgyal, on December 2, 1963. The Maharaja, eleventh in the Namgyal family dynasty, has married twice. His first wife, a Tibetan, bore him three children before she died in 1957. On March 20, 1963, he married Miss Hope Cooke, an American girl. They have a son, born in February 1964. The Maharaja is a devout Buddhist and has played an active role in Sikkimese affairs since 1950, when he represented his country in the Indo-Sikkim Treaty negotiations. He later became a leading figure in the National Party. Besides having an expert knowledge of Sikkim and its neighboring countries, he is well read on world affairs and has received special training in government administration and civil service procedures. An extensive traveler, he has made repeated visits to Tibet, India and the United States; he visited Japan in 1959 and Moscow in 1960. In 1963 he and his bride toured England, the Continent and the Soviet Union.

Political Dynamics

Political leadership since Sikkim emerged as a state in 1642 has been a monopoly of a small elite, virtually restricted to the ruling Namgyal family. Beginning in 1890, however, this leadership was strongly tempered by the presence of a British *dewan* and other officials. In 1949 they were replaced by Indian appointees whose influence has been even stronger than that of the British.

Political consciousness has developed largely from conflicts between the traditionally autocratic rule of the Namgyal family, generally supported by the Bhote-Lepcha community, and the demands for increased recognition by the recently arrived Nepalese community—an ever-increasing majority group. Relationships with India and China have at times been lively political issues, but these tend to be overshadowed by common aspirations for complete sovereignty.

Popular opposition to the vaguely defined legislative, judicial and administrative powers accorded by the Maharaja to large landholders created the basis for Sikkim's first widespread political movement. Mounting resistance to peasant exploitation led to the coalition in Gangtok of three political groups on December 7, 1947, to form the Sikkim State Congress Party, an offshoot of the Indian National Congress. The new party, composed mainly of young Nepalese, supported the peasants' "no tax" campaign and pressed for three major reforms: abolition of the landlord system, formation of a democratic government with the Maharaja as a constitutional monarch, and admission of Sikkim to the Republic of India, but with retention of internal autonomy.

After some State Congress Party leaders were arrested in February 1949, a number of their supporters concentrated in Gangtok to ask for their release and for Congress Party representatives in government councils. Tension mounted as a campaign for passive resistance threatened to disturb the peace. In response to the Maharaja's request for aid, India sent a small military force and an official vested with special powers, who later became the *dewan*. Meanwhile, several other political parties were formed. The Sikkim National Party, financed largely by the Maharaja, represented the Bhote and Lepcha communities and favored retention of the Maharaja's powers as sovereign head of state. The Sikkim Raja Praja Sammelan Party (Association of King and People) was composed almost entirely of Nepalese who favored dethronement of the Maharaja and tightening ties with India as a means of acquiring increased recognition in government. Some even wanted Sikkim to become an integral part of India, administrered by an Indian-appointed chief commissioner. As far as is known, there are no Communists in Sikkim.

In the first general elections, held in the summer of 1953, the State Congress Party won all six of the seats in the State Council allotted to the Nepalese community, and the National Party won all six of the seats allotted to the Bhote-Lepcha group. The Raja Praja Sammelan

Party was virtually eliminated as a political force. By late 1958, when the second general elections were held, the slow but steady economic progress seemed to have had a moderating effect on political activity. Pleas for joining the union of Indian states had been replaced by demands for a representative government within the framework of a constitutional monarchy. The presence of the *dewan* was generally resented. A new political party, the Swantatra Dal (Independent Group), had appeared, claiming to represent all communal groups. The Congress Party won a majority of the seats in the elections, but did not press for radical innovations. Its leaders generally supported the government's social and economic projects. The Bhote-Lepcha leaders appeared to regard their favorable position as secure. Political issues centered around persistent complaints by the Nepalese groups that the government discriminated against them. Their grievances, upheld by the State Congress and the Raja Praja Sammelan parties, included the imposition of an unfair share of the tax burden, restriction of settlement to certain areas and prohibition against buying land from Bhote without government permission.

By 1961 both the major parties (the State Congress and the National Party) favored a broad-based elected government. The authorities seemed reluctant, however, to meet the demands of the opposition groups. The Sikkim Subjects Regulations, promulgated in July 1961 and modified in July 1962, apparently was designed to appease some of the Nepalese complainants. At the same time it seemed to heed the warnings of some Bhote political leaders that infiltrations from eastern Nepal could be part of a plan to eventually take over the country and establish a Nepalese-dominated Himalayan federation.

The Regulations require that a foreigner may qualify for citizenship only after residing in the country 15 years. Lepcha and Bhote residents with Sikkimese fathers or grandfathers automatically are citizens. Meanwhile the opposition parties voiced demands for revision of the electoral system in order to obtain for their constituents representation in government proportionate to their numbers. They threatened, if confronted with government inaction, to launch a civil disobedience campaign and to boycott the general elections scheduled for the spring of 1962.

Possible clashes were avoided by the postponement of elections until the fall of 1963, and then indefinitely because of the Chinese Communist aggression starting in October, followed on November 13 by the declaration of a state of emergency, which as of early 1964 is still in effect. After the Chinese Communist attacks the opposition parties canceled their plans for a noncooperative movement and pledged full support of the government's defensive efforts.

Despite the unifying influence of the Chinese Communist threat, there persists an inherent conflict of viewpoints between the royally represented Lepcha-Bhote groups and the majority Nepalese group, the most aggressive element in the country's economy. This situation represents a serious hazard to tranquillity in Sikkim's political development. Furthermore, this risk is augmented by a lack of national consciousness and the persistent tendency of many residents to identify themselves according to ethnic or regional origin—as Bhote, Lepcha, Nepalese—rather than as Sikkimese. Government authorities hope that general cooperation in the economic projects called for under the two development plans will improve living standards, foster national pride and promote confidence in the country's ability to survive as a political entity.

Foreign Relations

The foreign relations of Sikkim are conducted solely by India under provisions of the Indo-Sikkim Treaty signed on December 5, 1950—Sikkim's only existent treaty with any foreign country. However, Sikkim joined the Colombo Plan with India's approval in November 1962. Close ties with Tibet prevailing prior to the Chinese Communist invasion of that country in 1950 have since deteriorated. These ties (based on traditions, customs and religious beliefs, including the spiritual leadership of the Dalai Lama, and nurtured largely by trade and royal family marriages with Tibetans) were practically severed by the Chinese Communists' drastic policy of political reorientation of Tibet toward Peiping. This forced the Sikkimese, situated south of the Himalayan barriers, to look to India for protection and guidance. India, regarding the northern boundary of Sikkim as an important stretch of front line in the Indo-Chinese border dispute, responded with liberal economic and military aid. Although sympathetic to the royal family, India has endeavored to maintain the uneasy balance between Sikkim's opposing domestic political groups, without incurring enmities that could be exploited by Chinese Communist forces seeking to "liberate" the country.

Sikkimese authorities attempt to maintain a neutral attitude toward the Chinese Communists and exercise care to avoid actions or disputes which might be used as a pretext for retaliatory tactics. The problem of dealing with Tibetan refugees is particularly sensitive in this respect. The initial influx of refugees, including the flight of the Dalai Lama in 1959 after the unsuccessful Tibetan revolt against the Chinese Communists, soon alerted the Sikkimese to their repressive policies. Hence, their reported proposals for a federation of Himalayan states evoked little interest, even among the Sikkimese opposition leaders.

In 1961, India agreed to bear the brunt of the refugee burden by accepting some 7,000, leaving only a few hundred to settle in Sikkim.

By 1963 most of the refugees from Tibet had been interrogated and passed on to India; some were sent to installations specially constructed with Indian funds and operated by the Sikkim Relief and Rehabilitation Committee. If any Communists are detected among the refugees they are sent back to Tibet.

The generally harmonious relations with Nepal and Bhutan are under Indian supervision. The bulk of the Nepalese migrations occurred during the period of the British protectorate and apparently have not become an issue between the authorities of the two states. Bhutanese incursions into Sikkim have ceased and the common boundary is not in dispute.

Defense Matters

Defense is a responsibility of the Indian Army. The 1950 Indo-Sikkim Treaty gave India the right to station troops anywhere in the country, take any measures regarded as necessary to defend it, control all imports of arms, build strategic roads and track down fugitives within the country. In 1961, Sikkim requested of India an increased participation in its own defense. The army, then consisting of only 60 men, was used primarily to guard the Maharaja's palace. India agreed to establish and equip a separate militia force of 280 men to be trained and commanded by Indian officers to help man the border outposts.

After the Chinese Communist aggressions of 1962, border defense precautions were intensified. India sent one infantry division to Sikkim to guard the critical roads and mountain passes, giving particular attention to the Natu La and the Jelep La passes about 25 miles northeast of Gangtok, in view of recurring reports of reinforcements arriving at a major Chinese Communist military post maintained at Yatung only some 10 miles from the passes. Civil defense measures, such as the installation of air raid sirens in Gangtok and the organization of "village defense committees," were announced in the Indian press.

Development of the militia has progressed rather slowly. In July 1963 a Sikkimese official announced that half the force, after completing its training, would rotate with comparable Indian forces in border security duties. The Sikkimese seem to welcome the presence of Indian troops, who mix well with the local residents and spend money freely among them.

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BHUTAN

Bhutan, second largest of the three Himalayan kingdoms, is situated within the eastern sector of the main range which arcs around Tibet's southern and western borders. Slightly larger than Switzerland and elliptical in shape, it has common frontiers with only three states: Tibet, on the west, north and northeast; India on the east, south and southwest; Sikkim on the west. Its total population, estimated in 1964 at approximately 725,000, consists principally of Bhote, a people of Tibetan origin, and a large Nepalese minority (see fig. 1).

The country's rugged mountainous terrain was of major importance in determining its history. Because the few high valleys in which the population was concentrated were accessible only with great difficulty, the Bhote lived in isolation in the Himalayan range for centuries, their only uninterrupted contact with the outside world having been by way of trade caravans to and from Tibet. Internally the terrain made for centuries of feudal fragmentation and internecine warfare among rival groups, whose fierce jealousies led to almost continual conflict and bloodshed.

Tibetan Buddhist cultural influences have long dominated Bhutanese society. Lamas from Tibet introduced Buddhism to the area, eventually establishing it as the dominant faith, and in the early seventeenth century set up a formal government structure based on a division of authority between temporal and spiritual leaders, which persisted unchanged until the turn of the twentieth century.

Under the present Maharaja, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, who has ruled since 1962, Bhutan is confronted with powerful forces for change, especially in view of the tension created by the Chinese Communist aggressions along the Indian border which took place in October 1962. With strong support from India, which since 1959 has had the responsibility for conducting Bhutan's external affairs, it is undertaking a carefully planned program of economic and social development and slowly entering the modern world.

The society is predominantly rural, and no towns or urbanized communities in the Western sense exist. The largest populated places are clusters of houses built around a structure called a *dzong,* a combination of fortress and administrative and religious center. Neither great concentrations of wealth nor grinding poverty are evident. Farming is the principal means of livelihood, and families are generally self-sufficient, producing their own food, weaving their own cloth, and building and repairing their own houses. On the whole they eat and dress well, show little desire to possess luxuries and are seemingly content to follow a way of life which has as yet barely been touched by modern influences.

Barter is the basis of Bhutan's economy; with the exception of two token Bhutanese coins, Indian currency is used for the infrequent cash transactions. The total annual revenue of the government is not more than IR5 million to IR6 million (for value of the Indian rupee, see Glossary). Land tax accounts for more than half the total revenue, other sources being the cattle tax, grazing fees and excises. More than half the government's expenditures are for defense; a traditional practice of supporting several thousand lamas in eight monasteries accounts for an additional 25 percent. India, on its part, has financed the Five-Year Plan (1961–66) of economic development and provides an annual subsidy of IR1.2 million.

The Maharaja theoretically is an absolute monarch, but by the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship signed on August 8, 1949, his government agreed to be guided by the advice of India in the conduct of external affairs, while the government of India agreed to refrain from interference in Bhutan's internal administration. To assist in his administration the Maharaja has a Prime Minister, an Advisory Council of eight persons and a National Advisory Assembly called the Tsongdu, composed of about 140 members.

Bhutan is virtually autonomous in the administration of its internal affairs and has more influence over the conduct of its foreign affairs than does Sikkim. Some Bhutanese leaders contend that, in view of the vague phrasing of the Indo-Bhutan Treaty, Bhutan is not strictly obliged to accept India's advice. However, the Maharaja and his government, recognizing their dependent status, have always heeded India's counsel, and the divergent viewpoints in this respect have not become the subject of serious dispute. India maintains liaison with both the Bhutanese and Sikkimese Governments by means of a political officer in Gangtok.

For defense purposes India regards Bhutan's northern boundary as a part of its own frontier. The invasion of Tibet in 1950 by Communist China raised the question of that country's intentions toward Bhutan and the other Himalayan states. The threat to Bhutan seemed particularly serious as early as 1954, when the Peiping authorities distributed maps showing extensive areas in northeastern and northwestern Bhutan within Communist China.

Apprehensions mounted in October 1962 when Chinese Communist forces moved across the frontier into India's North East Frontier Agency, just east of Bhutan. But as of early 1964 the Chinese Communists had refrained from entering Bhutanese territory, and the Bhutanese authorities had consistently rejected Peiping's offers for aid and its proposals to enter unilateral discussions regarding the demarcation of Bhutan's northern boundary. The Chinese Communist actions have, in fact, served to strengthen Bhutan's ties with India.

THE LAND

Size and Population Density

The total area of Bhutan is some 18,000 square miles, its maximum distance from north to south being approximately 110 miles and that from east to west about 200 miles. In comparison with the other Himalyan kingdoms, the country is sparsely settled, with slightly more than 40 persons per square mile, as against 60 for Sikkim and 180 for Nepal.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the country cannot be identified by easily recognizable natural features. The indefinite common border with Tibet extends some 300 miles along the snow-capped and almost inaccessible crest of the main Himalayan Range, except for short distances in the northeast, northwest and west, where it lies south of the watershed. The alignment of this boundary has been repeatedly disputed by Communist China.

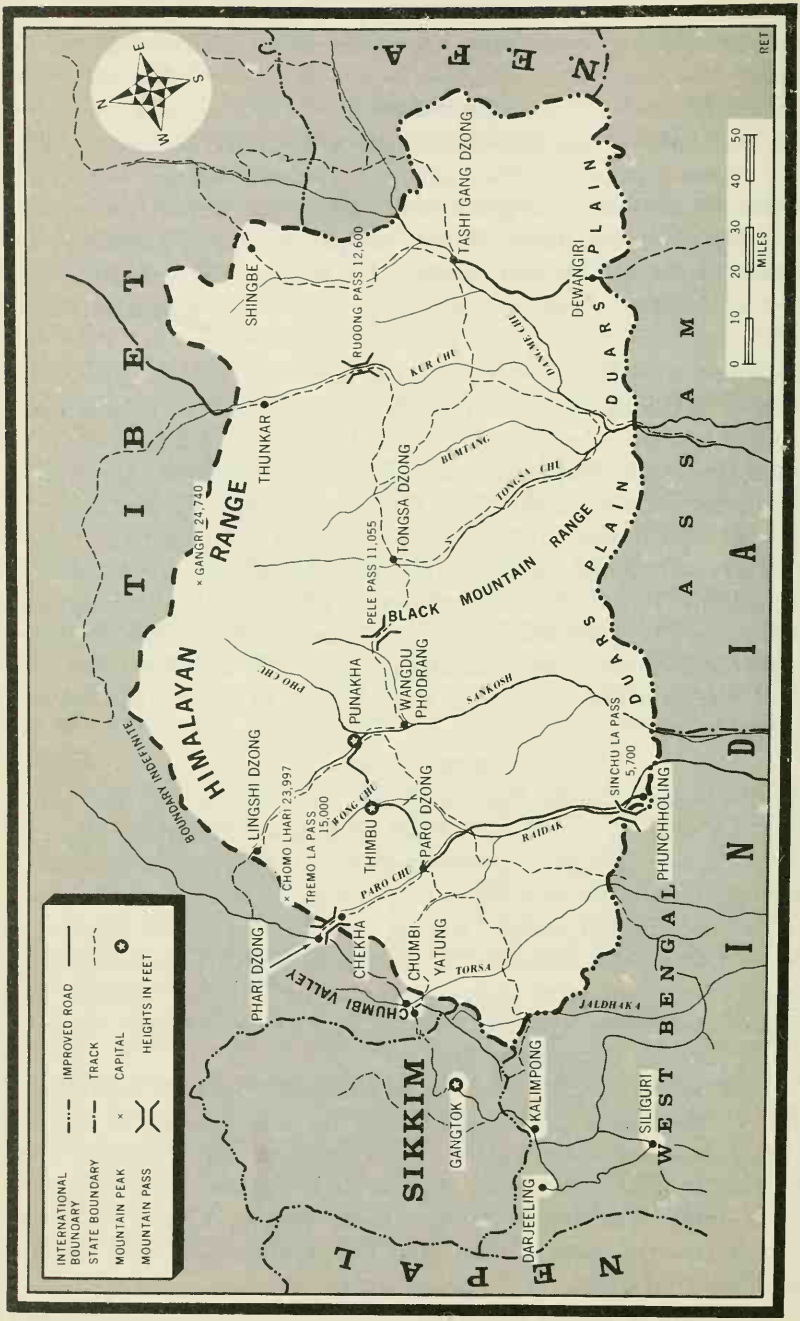
The border with India, extending some 330 miles, was established by the British in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The eastern section of this border, following spurs and valleys on the southern slopes of the main Himalayan Range, runs some 90 miles between Bhutan and the Indian territory known as the North East Frontier Agency. On the south, the border with Assam (150 miles) and with West Bengal (90 miles) extends generally along the southern base of the abruptly rising Himalayan foothills. In some areas it includes the northern rim of the malarial Brahmaputra River lowlands, caller the Duars Plain in this area. On the west, the boundary with Sikkim, extending only about 20 miles, was likewise established by the British and accepted by the Indian Government (see fig. 21).

Strategic Passes

The five passes through the Himalayas have determined the course of Bhutan's caravan routes with Tibet. Bhutanese chieftains formerly competed fiercely for control of these passes and the trade through them; the winners usually became rulers or powerful contenders for supreme authority. Since Bhutan stopped trading with Tibet in 1953 to impede the spread of Communist influence, the passes have lost their earlier significance. They now serve as escape routes for Tibetan refugees, and Bhutanese authorities regard them with concern as potential invasion routes for Chinese Communist forces.

With elevations ranging from approximately 15,000 to more than 20,000 feet, the passes are negotiable only by pack animals or porters. The three most important appear to be those on routes leading from Paro Dzong in Bhutan across the northwestern frontier into the Chumbi Valley of Tibet. The southernmost of these leads to Yatung; the next, Tremo La pass, to Phari Dzong; and the northernmost, just beyond Lingshi Dzong, to Düna.

On the eastern section of the frontier, the pass north of Thunkar leads to Lhasa over a Tibetan motorable road reportedly to be completed by the Chinese Communists by 1965. The pass at Shingbe is on the shortest


TIBET
N.E.F.A.
NEPAL
SIKKIM
WEST BENGAL
ASSAM
INDIA
HIMALAYAN RANGE
BLACK MOUNTAIN RANGE
DUARS PLAIN
BOUNDARY INDEFINITE
CHUMBI VALLEY
SHINGBE
RUOONG PASS 12,600
TASHI GANG DZONG
DEWANGIRI
THUNKAR
GANGRI 24,740
TONGSA DZONG
PELE PASS 11,055
PUNAKHA
WANGDU PHODRANG
LINGSHI DZONG
CHOMO LHARI 23,997
TREMO LA PASS 15,000
THIMBU
PARO DZONG
PHARI DZONG
CHEKHA
CHUMBI
YATUNG
SINCHU LA PASS 5,700
PHUNCHHOLING
GANGTOK
KALIMPONG
DARJEELING
SILIGURI
KUR CHU
DAWME CHU
BUMTANG
TONGSA CHU
PHO CHU
SANKOSH
WONG CHU
PARO CHU
RAIDAK
TORSA
JALDHAKA
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STATE BOUNDARY
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Figure 21. Bhutan.

route from Tibet to Tashi Gang Dzong, the most important community in eastern Bhutan.

Other important passes include those within Bhutan which lead across the mountain spurs jutting southward from the main Himalayan Range. Tashi Gang Dzong in eastern Bhutan and Paro Dzong in the west are connected by the country's only lateral communication route, which must cross a series of valleys and ridges, averaging one for each 15 miles of trail. The two most critical passes on this east-west axis route are within 25 miles on either side of Tongsa Dzong, the most important community in central Bhutan; on the east is Rudong Pass, elevation 12,600 feet; on the west is Pele Pass, elevation 11,055 feet (see fig. 22).

Mountains

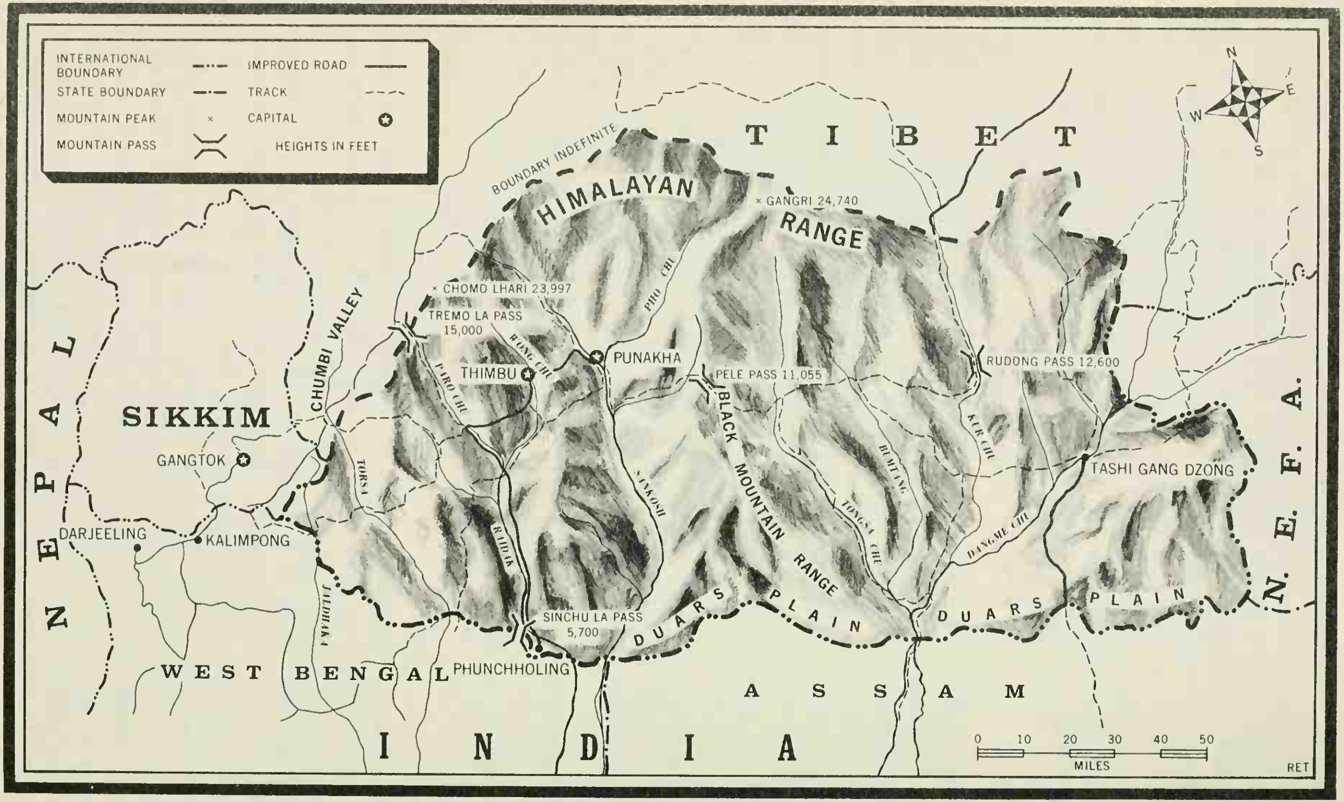
Bhutan is entirely mountainous, except for narrow strips of the Duars Plain which protrude across the southern borders into the Himalayan foothills at several places. Elevations vary from approximately 1,000 feet in the south to almost 25,000 feet in the north. The people are proud of their mountains, which are relatively unknown to the outside world, mainly because of the country's past policy of seclusion. Visitors are impressed with the scenic beauty of the snow-capped peaks and the variegated pattern of the rugged and deeply carved landscape.

Along the northern border there are four peaks with elevations above 20,000 feet. The highest is Gangri, elevation 24,740 feet, north of Tongsa Dzong; next in height is the country's most famous peak, picturesque Chomo Lhari, elevation 23,997 feet, northwest of Punakha. The most prominent spur jutting southward into Bhutan is the Black Mountain Range, which separates the country into two almost equal parts, with the dividing line at Pele Pass.

Rivers

All Bhutan's numerous rivers flow generally southward through gorges and narrow valleys, eventually to drain into the Brahmaputra some 50 miles south of the boundary with India. Except in the east and in the west, the headwaters of the streams are in the regions of permanent snow along the Tibetan border. None of the rivers is navigable, but many are potential sources of hydroelectric power.

The area east of the Black Mountain watershed is drained by the Tongsa Chu and its tributaries, the Bumtang and Dangme. West of the Black Mountain Range the drainage pattern changes to a series of parallel streams, beginning with the Sankosh River and its tributary, the Pho Chu. Farther west are the Paro Chu and Wong Chu which join to form the Raidak before it flows through the Sinchu La pass into India. Still farther west are the Torsa and Jaldhaka Rivers which rise in the Chumbi Valley and in Sikkim, respectively.


INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
STATE BOUNDARY
MOUNTAIN PEAK
MOUNTAIN PASS
IMPROVED ROAD
TRACK
CAPITAL
HEIGHTS IN FEET
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BOUNDARY INDEFINITE
HIMALAYAN
RANGE
× GANGRI 24,740
× CHOMO LHARI 23,997
TREMO LA PASS 15,000
PHO CHU
WONG CHU
PARO CHU
THIMBU
PUNAKHA
PELE PASS 11,055
RUDONG PASS 12,600
BLACK MOUNTAIN RANGE
BUMTANG
KUR CHU
TONGSA CHU
DANGME CHU
TASHI GANG DZONG
SANKOSH
RAIDAK
TORSA
JALDHAKA
CHUMBI VALLEY
SIKKIM
GANGTOK
NEPAL
DARJEELING
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Figure 22. Physical Features of Bhutan.

Mineral and Timber Resources

Deposits of coal, mica, graphite, iron ore, copper, gypsum and limestone are present in quantities sufficient for profitable exploitation. Other mineral findings include dolomite and gold. The most readily available natural resource is timber, as more than two-thirds of Bhutan's total area is forest covered. Oaks, birches, conifers and various trees suitable for paper pulp, turpentine and resin are plentiful, but these resources remain untapped.

Flora and Fauna

Vegetation is generally lush wherever soil is available and varies from tropical jungles in the south to alpine grasses and flowers in the north. Uncultivated areas in the narrow Duars Plain are rank with tall, coarse grasses and bamboo thickets. On the adjacent low-lying hills are dense forests composed mainly of sal, magnolia and rhododendron trees intermingled with tangled undergrowth. The region abounds with animal life, such as the elephant, leopard, tiger, deer and python.

Farther north in the high valleys and steep slopes astride the central axis through Tashi Gang Dzong and Paro Dzong, types of vegetation depend mainly on elevation and exposure to the monsoonal rains. The most densely wooded forests are on the rainy windward (generally westward) slopes. At lower altitudes along this axis and to the south, oak and birch trees predominate in most areas. In the mixed forests to the north and on the crests of the high ridges to the south, conifers generally predominate over the oak and birch. Above 12,000 feet, trees become increasingly dwarfed and a variety of grasses provide favorable grazing for the hardy Bhutanese cattle and yaks during the short summers. At 14,000 feet almost all vegetation has disappeared, except in sheltered spots. The mountain forests support various species of animal life, including the bear, deer, leopard and tiger. Leeches are a particular source of annoyance to man and beast.

Climate

The monsoonal alternation of wet and dry seasons, characteristic of the general area, is complicated in Bhutan by topography and altitude as in the other Himalayan states. The moisture-laden southerly winds from the Bay of Bengal bring the heaviest rains each year from about May to December. Windward southern slopes consistently receive heavier precipitation than the protected adjacent leeward slopes.

Meteorological statistics are lacking, but according to information based on general impressions of its infrequent visitors, the country may be divided into three general climatic zones. In the Duars Plain and adjacent low valleys, at elevations up to 3,500 feet, the climate is subtropical with high humidity and heavy rainfall, estimated at 200 to 300 inches each year. From 3,500 to 7,500 feet it is temperate, with cool winters and hot summers. From 7,500 to 14,000 feet the climate is still temperate, but with cold winters and cool summers; the annual rainfall averages from 40 to 60 inches. Above 14,000 feet, an arctic climate prevails, with most areas permanently covered with snow or glaciers.

HISTORY

Little is known of the history of Bhutan before the late eighteenth century. It is generally assumed that the forebears of the dominant ethnic group, the Bhote, came from Tibet, but the time of their arrival is uncertain. Of the several versions suggested by modern scholars, the most probable is that expansion across the mountains began in the ninth century when Tibet, at the height of its power, sent troops to seize control of the area. According to this account the Tibetan invaders met with little resistance in Bhutan, at that time a Hindu state ruled by a maharaja, and readily brought it under their control. Many of the local inhabitants fled south to the foothills at the base of the main Himalayan range or withdrew to Cooch Behar (now in West Bengal), a region with which they had ancestral connections.

Small groups of farmers, herdsmen and Buddhist priests followed the Tibetan warriors across the mountains, the main influx coming in a southeastward direction through the Chumbi Valley and across into Bhutan over several high passes in the main Himalayan range. By the mid-sixteenth century a number of *dzongs* had been established in western Bhutan at places in the valleys where the terrain was sufficiently hospitable for habitation, including sites as far south as Punakha, the present capital, and Wangdü Phodrang. Intermarriage between the Tibetans and the descendants of those of the original inhabitants who remained had become common and many of the latter, originally Hindus or animists, had been converted to the Lamaist Buddhism of their conquerors.

Development of the government began early in the seventeenth century when a Tibetan lama, believed by his followers to be a reincarnation of Buddha, established his authority over the others and was given the title of Dharma Raja (spiritual leader). His successor is said to have organized the country into several territories, or provinces, each of which included one or more forts within its jurisdictional area. The governors (*penlops*), who administered these territories, were appointed officials, who in turn appointed subordinate governors (called *jungpens*) from among the leaders in their respective forts. The Dharma Rajas concerned themselves primarily with religious matters, leaving authority over secular affairs to an appointed minister, who soon became known as the Deb Raja (temporal leader).

Subsequently, as the Dharma Raja became increasingly preoccupied with spiritual matters, the Deb Raja came to be regarded as the actual head of state, and his post was given to persons "elected" by a council of *penlops* and *jungpens*. In practice the most powerful *penlop*, usually the most influential landlord in the country, either appointed the Deb Raja or usurped the post for himself. Thus, a change in the post of Deb Raja frequently resulted in a change of *penlops* and their subordinate *jungpens*, a system which bred intense rivalries for rulership, as the ousted officials customarily would occupy their time in making preparations to regain power by any possible means.

Beset by internal difficulties, Bhutan nevertheless followed an aggressive policy toward its neighbors during the eighteenth century, sending frequent raiding parties across the western and northern borders. Its warriors plundered wide areas in Sikkim, kidnaped the king and carried off many captives, emerging from a series of engagements in possession of the Ha valley and the Kalimpong region (then a part of Sikkim and now in West Bengal).

Bhutan's aggressions on the southern border, however, were far less successful. In 1771 when the Deb Raja sent troops into Cooch Behar—possibly to prevent any British attempt to set up a trade route through his country to Tibet—the British intervened, drove the Bhutanese out and pursued them into their own territory. Peace was arranged in 1773, largely through the intercession of Tibet.

Disputes along this border nevertheless continued into the early nineteenth century, with the result that in 1841 the Government of British India annexed the Duars Plain to Assam, placing its northern frontier along the general line of the present boundary. The British in return agreed to pay a small annual subsidy to the Bhutanese as long as they remained peaceful. Bhutanese raiders continued to operate across the border, carrying off Indian subjects of the British as slaves.

In 1863 a British representative, sent to Bhutan to protest against these infractions, was kidnaped and forced to sign an agreement returning the Duars Plain to Bhutan. After escaping, he repudiated the agreement, stopped the subsidy and demanded restoration of the captives. When the demands were rejected in 1865, British troops invaded Bhutan and forced the Bhutanese authorities to sue for peace. Under the terms of the Sinchu La Treaty, which terminated hostilities, the Duars Plain and Kalimpong were ceded back to British India, the Bhutanese agreed to refer any dispute with Sikkim or Cooch Behar to the British Government for negotiation and Bhutan's annual subsidy was greatly increased. Thereafter, relations with the British Government in India remained satisfactory.

The dual system of government, which has been in existence for some 300 years, was discontinued in the early twentieth century when the incumbent Dharma Raja died and no successor who could qualify as the reincarnation of Buddha could be found. The Deb Raja then took on the added responsibility of administering to the spiritual needs of the people. The post of Dharma Raja finally was abolished in 1907, when with British support Ugyen Wangchuk, the *penlop* of Tongsa province in the eastern region, was elected hereditary maharaja of the country. Hereditary secular and religious rule vested in the Wangchuk family facilitated the establishment of a unified, centrally administered government for the first time in Bhutan's history.

In 1910 Bhutan, in return for a further increase in its annual subsidy, agreed to accept British guidance in its external affairs while refusing to allow British interference in its internal affairs. This decision meant that Bhutan did not receive help in building roads, expanding communications and developing the economy as did Sikkim, which was a British protectorate. The pace of its development during the first half of the twentieth century was therefore extremely slow. The nation's limited resources continued to be drained off to support the monasteries, no roads were built, word of mouth remained virtually the only means of communication, and almost no one other than the ruling circle acquired more than a rudimentary education. Although, as in Sikkim, certain changes were set in motion by the continuing arrival of immigrants from Nepal, Bhutan's rulers chose as far as possible to insulate the country against exposure to the outside world.

After Word War II, India achieved independence and took over Great Britain's responsibilities in the realm of Bhutan's foreign affairs. With Indian support the country, under a forward-looking maharaja who has completely reversed the former policy of isolation, has made a slow but steady beginning toward entering the modern world.

POLITICS

Government

During the 12 years of his incumbency as a theoretical absolute monarch, the Maharaja has introduced certain features of modern representative government. The latter include a Prime Minister, an Advisory Council, comparable to a Cabinet, and a Tsongdu or National Advisory Assembly, created in the mid-1950's. Although the maharaja appoints the Prime Minister, the Advisory Council and about 25 percent of the Assembly members, the remaining assemblymen are elected indirectly every 5 years from among village headmen.

The Assembly is composed mainly of lamas, district officials and village headmen, each representing a constituency of some 5,000 persons and comprised of several villages. Each village, on the basis of one vote for a family, elects a headman every 3 years. By agreement among themselves the headmen from each constituency select their representatives to serve in the Assembly for a 5-year term.

As many of the assemblymen are illiterate, most of the legislative bills are initiated by the maharaja and placed before the Assembly by the Prime Minister. Free expression of opinion is encouraged, however, and debates on some issues reportedly become quite stormy. Members may criticize the monarchy, even the maharaja himself.

The Assembly meets once or twice each year, sometimes in Thimbu, the winter capital, and sometimes in Punakha, the summer capital. Each session, lasting 1 or 2 weeks, is presided over by the Speaker, who is also Chief Secretary to the government. Voting is by show of hands, and the maharaja has final veto power. Presumably a proposed bill can be defeated by a majority vote, but there is no record of such an action.

For administrative purposes Bhutan is divided into 15 districts called *dzongs,* each headed by a commissioner (*trimpong*), who is responsible for law and order and the general welfare of the people in his area. It is mainly through him that the Prime Minister exercises the authority of the central government. The *trimpong* is assisted by a senior official (*nyerchen*), whose primary function is tax collection.

Each village has a council consisting generally of one member from each family. The council elects a village headman, who, assisted by the council, is authorized to pass sentence for minor offenses. Cases involving more serious crimes are referred to the district magistrate (*zimpen*). All defendants have the right of appeal up to the maharaja, whose decision is final. The maharaja alone is empowered to impose or remit the death sentence. Capital punishment, opposed by most religious leaders, is authorized only for the crimes of espionage and murder. The people appear proud of their low crime rate, and cases calling for the death penalty have not arisen during the reign of the present maharaja. However, some lamas reportedly petitioned the maharaja in 1962 to pass the death sentence on a man convicted of practicing witchcraft. Because it was not a capital offense, the request was refused.

Political Dynamics

Political leadership has been virtually a monopoly of the Wangchuk family since 1907, when it was vested with power to rule over secular and religious affairs. It appears to be confronted with no serious sources of opposition. The Maharaja himself is deeply involved in the broad task of modernization, but leaves the handling of ordinary political matters to his forceful brother-in-law, Prime Minister Jigme Polden Dorji.

Several factors contribute to the apparent apathy of the population toward political issues. Living standards are relatively good compared to most other Asian states. Overcrowded and impoverished urban settlements are lacking, and almost all families own their own land.

Moreover, until the Chinese Communist aggressions in Tibet and against the neighboring Indian frontier, the people had been virtually isolated from the political turmoil of the outside world. Because of the high illiteracy rate and lack of communications facilities, political organization and the dissemination of information on political issues have been seriously handicapped. It is probable, however, that the creation of a National Advisory Assembly with a large proportion of elected representation will gradually diminish this apathy.

The only political movement with any semblance of organization is the Bhutanese National Congress, which represents the Nepalese minority group, concentrated mainly along the southern border and estimated to be more than 25 percent of the total population. It also includes a few disgruntled Bhutanese seeking to escape conscription in road construction work gangs. Because it is not recognized by the government and because of the difficulties confronting opposition activities in Bhutan, the National Congress operates from bases in Assam and Siliguri in West Bengal, of which the latter is the more important. Despite the apparent hopes of its leaders for Indian support, the Indian Government seemingly gives it no special encouragement because of an unwillingness to risk political instability in this critical area along its northern frontier.

The principal demands of the National Congress program as set forth by its leader, D. B. Gurung, include abolition of discrimination against the Nepalese by abolishing the law of 1959 prohibiting the further arrival of emigrants; liberalization of the maharaja's rule; and an increase of elected representation in the government. Information regarding the effectiveness of the program's appeal is not available, but some of the visitors returning from the country assert that it evokes a sympathetic reaction among a gradually increasing number of people.

Despite the general sluggishness of political movements, there are several sources of discontent that might be exploited at a propitious time as issues in a campaign against the ruling powers. Traces of feudalism still remain, and landlords still receive a large part of the country's income. More than 25 percent of the state income reportedly is given to the monasteries. Although the general political picture appears calm on the surface, the latent discontent and the demands of the large Nepalese minority could under strong leadership readily develop into a major political problem.

Key Political Figures

The leading personality in the country is Maharaja Jigme Dorji Wangchuk. Born in 1929 and enthroned on October 27, 1952, he is third in the hereditary line of maharajas established in 1907 by the British. Although educated in Bhutan by royal tutors he speaks fluent

English, Hindi and Tibetan. In 1951 he married the European-educated cousin of the Maharaja of Sikkim. During his brief reign he has established a countrywide reputation for his humanitarianism and for his reforms, which include the abolition of slavery, democratization of royalty, and promotion of women's rights. He suffered a severe heart attack on March 19, 1963, but reportedly was completely recovered by February 1964 after treatment in Zurich.

The Maharaja's closest adviser is the dynamic Prime Minister, Jigme Polden Dorji, a brother of the Queen. Born about 1918, he is the most powerful official in the government. Although he is responsible only to the Maharaja, he customarily consults the National Assembly on all affairs of state and respects the opinions of its members.

Foreign Relations

The foreign relations of Bhutan have been conducted by a foreign power since the signing of the Punakha Treaty with the British in 1910. Under this treaty the Bhutanese Government accepted British guidance in foreign affairs, and the British agreed to exercise no interference in Bhutan's internal affairs. After the British left India the pact was supplanted on August 8, 1949, by the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship, a slightly more comprehensive version of the Punakha Treaty, with India replacing Great Britain in the text.

Under the Indo-Bhutan Treaty Bhutan "agrees to be guided" by India's advice in the conduct of foreign relations, while India agrees to respect Bhutan's autonomy in internal administration and to accept responsibility for the country's defense and for its strategic communications. The Treaty also provides that India shall raise Bhutan's annual subsidy to IR500,000 and retrocede to it about 32 square miles of territory around Dewangiri, which had been ceded to Assam by the Sinchu La Treaty in 1865. It is also stated that the Bhutanese Government is free to import from or through India any arms, ammunition, warlike materials or supplies as are desired for the strength and welfare of Bhutan.

The agreement regarding these shipments is effective as long as India is satisfied that Bhutan's intentions are friendly and that the items will not fall into unfriendly hands. Bhutan, on its part, undertakes to prevent the reexportation of any of these items through government or individual channels. The Treaty can be terminated or modified only by mutual consent.

The Treaty's vague statement relative to India's "guidance" in foreign relations has been the subject of heated discussion in the National Advisory Assembly and is interpreted by some Bhutanese leaders to mean that India may offer advice but Bhutan is not obliged to accept it. However, despite a quiescent desire for full sovereignty, the government on the whole realizes its dependent status and is pro-Indian in viewpoint. Close ties are maintained between the two countries by frequent exchanges of visits by officials engaged in the numerous Indian-supported projects initiated in furtherance of the country's economic development program.

Bhutanese authorities like those in Sikkim attempt to maintain a neutral attitude toward the Chinese Communists. This policy of neutrality is frequently put to a test by Peiping's offer of financial help and its proposals for unilateral negotiations for defining the uncertain boundary with Tibet.

Soon after the Chinese Communists came to power they published various maps of the Himalayan frontier region on which the southern boundary included large areas—such as the Tashi Gang Dzong district in northeastern Bhutan and a sizable strip of territory in northwestern Bhutan—commonly accepted as belonging to Bhutan. When Prime Minister Nehru in 1954 questioned the Chinese Communist leader Chou En-lai regarding the maps, he replied that they were only reproductions of old "pre-liberation" maps and that his government had not had time to revise them. Similar maps published in 1958 showed the same boundaries as the earlier ones. Evasive responses were given Prime Minister Nehru, who mentioned the maps in repeated notes to Peiping. Finally, on September 8, 1959, Chou En-lai replied that questions regarding the Bhutanese northern boundary were not within the scope of discussions between the People's Republic of China and India.

In 1960, Peiping published still another map, showing a part of Bhutan as being within Communist China. Meanwhile, during a major propaganda effort mounted in Lhasa, senior Chinese Communist army officers and civilian officials threatened to "liberate" Bhutan and the other Himalayan frontier states "wrongfully held by imperialist India" and suggested that military action might be taken to occupy these areas. In January 1961 the Maharaja asserted that certain unofficial Chinese Communists had contacted his Prime Minister, Jigme Dorji, and suggested that he hold direct conversations with the Peiping government to settle the border disputes. In 1962 the Prime Minister reportedly was again approached with a Chinese Communist proposal, this one to join a "Confederation of Himalayan States" composed of Sikkim, Nepal, the North East Frontier Agency and Nagaland.

Other Chinese Communist suggestions at this period included exchanging some territory with Tibet and merging this area with Sikkim to make a viable economic unit. The Maharaja flatly rejected these overtures, apparently designed to lure Bhutan away from India. In November 1962, a month after the Chinese Communist aggressions had begun against India, the Peiping authorities published a series of five maps which without explanation included within Bhutan the areas previously indicated to be within Communist China.

Despite the revised maps the theoretically neutral attitude toward the Chinese Communists began to be tempered with fear after Peiping's aggressions against India in 1962, and Bhutanese authorities drew closer to India for assurances of support. Public statements regarding the boundary dispute stressed the importance attached to the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of 1949. India in turn became increasingly sensitive regarding any direct contact between Bhutanese and Chinese Communist personages. Requests by Prime Minister Jigme Dorji for participation in any negotiations with Peiping relating to Bhutan were rejected. Nevertheless, Peiping occasionally makes indirect and unofficial approaches to Bhutanese leaders, apparently to perpetuate controversial discussions regarding Bhutan's boundary and its lack of autonomy in foreign relations.

Tibetan refugees are a potential source of friction with Communist China. When they began arriving in 1950 the Bhutanese Government, to preclude misunderstandings and disputes with the Peiping regime, adopted a policy of refusing them the privilege of permanent asylum, but conceded their right of transit on the way to India. After the revolt of 1959 in Tibet about 3,000 Tibetans, mostly fighting men, entered Bhutan. In early 1961, India declined to accept more refugees, leaving some 4,000 within Bhutan, theoretically awaiting permits to enter India.

DEFENSE MATTERS

The defense of Bhutan, like that of Sikkim, is a responsibility of the Indian military establishment, but as there is no agreement to station Indian troops within Bhutanese territory, India lacks full protective powers. Bhutan even protested against the withdrawal of Indian soldiers through the country in the autumn of 1962, when they were pulling back from Chinese Communist attacks on the North East Frontier Agency.

Because of its geographical position Bhutan has many strategic advantages and some vulnerabilities related to the defense of northern India. The Himalayan foothills in the south overlook some of the richest areas in Western Bengal and Assam, particularly the tea gardens of the Duars Plain along the Brahmaputra River. Moreover, the heights in the southwest dominate a section of the rail and motor route through West Bengal which forms a narrow corridor, only 30 miles wide, joining India proper with its northeastern states. Thus, possession of Bhutan by a hostile power would make India's position in these states untenable (see figs. 1 and 22).

The main Himalayan Range is a formidable natural defensive barrier in the north, while its high, steep spurs extending southward and the lack of roads would seriously restrict any east-west movement of land forces. Invaders would have to live in an inhospitable country and carry their supplies over narrow, rocky and frequently icy trails. Local defenders accustomed to the climate and familiar with the terrain could move and sustain themselves with relative ease.

An indication of the importance attached to this area by the Chinese Communists is their large military garrison, estimated at some 250,000 troops, and an air force installation, maintained in the Lhasa area about 100 miles north of the Bhutanese border. An important military post is also established at Yatung in the southern tip of the Chumbi Valley adjoining Bhutan's western boundary.

The interest of Communist China in the area is further indicated by its use of forced labor to construct a 200-mile motorable route from Lhasa to the pass on the Bhutanese border north of Thunkar, reportedly scheduled to be completed in 1965.

The Chinese Communist aggressions in Tibet and especially the Tibetan revolt in 1959, followed by an influx of refugees, were important factors in Bhutan's decision to stop relying on seclusion as the country's cheapest and best defensive measure. India, holding the same viewpoint, responded generously when Bhutan in 1960 requested aid in road-building projects. The need for roads was especially emphasized in 1958 when Prime Minister Nehru went to Bhutan. The only practical method for entering the country at that time was through Sikkim and Tibet, by jeep from Gangtok to Natu La Pass, thence by ponies and yak across the Chumbi Valley to Paro Dzong. Permission to pass through Tibetan territory depended on the whims of the Chinese Communists. Hence the increased tension along the border when they attacked the Indian frontier in 1962 served to further expedite the road program.

Work began in January 1960 and by the end of 1963 construction was either completed or well along on three strategically important roads, two of which were access routes from the south. The route leading into Bhutan from West Bengal at Phunchholing was completed for 95 miles to Punakha, making it possible to cover the distance by motor vehicle in 10 hours instead of 6 or 7 days as formerly required by animals or porters. In southeastern Bhutan, a 40-mile road reportedly was near completion, linking Dewangiri to Tashi Gang, an important route junction with trails leading east to the North East Frontier Agency and north to Tibet. In addition, work had started on the 150-mile axial route from Thimbu to Tashi Gang Dzong, which crosses many deep gorges and five mountain passes, some rising to 14,000 feet. Slow progress was expected, however, and this difficult job was not scheduled for completion until 1967. But the roads opened so far have already ended the country's isolation and enabled India to get supplies quickly to critical areas.

Bhutan has no airfields and there are only limited possibilities for the economical construction of airstrips suitable for accommodating transport planes. The Indian airfield most convenient to western Bhutan is at Baghdogra, just west of Siliguri, in West Bengal. Conditions are favorable, however, for the use of helicopters in many areas.

The Bhutanese military force consists of some 5,000 lightly armed men, trained and organized under the supervision of a few Bhutanese officers who have returned since early 1963 from instruction courses at Dehra Dun, the Indian cadet academy. Development of military potential became a matter of urgency in 1958 and 1959, when the Bhutanese authorities, noting the unsettled conditions in Tibet, the flight of the Dalai Lama and the influx of refugees, became apprehensive regarding the country's internal security and territorial integrity. This sense of urgency was heightened in October 1962 by the Chinese Communist attack against India's northern frontier, particularly by the action in the area just east of the common boundary with the North East Frontier Agency. Increased fears hastened the adoption in 1962 of a new conscription law affecting all males from 18 to 50 years of age.

Before the Chinese Communist aggressions, Bhutan's military force consisted of about 10,000 primitively armed militia dispersed in small detachments throughout the country and controlled by provincial authorities. In August 1959, Prime Minister Dorji in New Delhi requested the Indian Government for a definite commitment on military aid in case of aggression. Early in 1961 the Maharaja and the Prime Minister, conferring in New Delhi with Prime Minister Nehru and his military leaders, formulated a plan for carrying out India's defense responsibilities under the Treaty of 1949. Some Indian Army units were moved to positions where they would be readily available for Bhutan's defense. India agreed to provide arms, ammunition and other military supplies as needed. Furthermore, the Maharaja invited a group of senior Indian military specialists to visit Bhutan later in the year to study the country's defense needs. In accordance with their recommendations Bhutan began reorganizing its military elements and sent several officer candidates to the Indian military academy. After graduating as second lieutenants and receiving some practical experience with Indian units in the North East Frontier Agency, the young officers are charged with directing the reorganization program, under which the command and administration of the Army is being centralized at Thimbu. They also are in charge of the military training program for village headmen and for the conscripted recruits.

Development of the new Army is handicapped by a lack of qualified officers and military instructors. In January 1963 about 150 Bhutanese youths were being trained for these duties in India. Indications are that, because of manpower and leadership shortcomings, an Army of about 10,000 would be the maximum that could be mobilized by 1965. Even a small increase in strength probably would require outside financial aid, since more than half the Bhutanese budget had already been allocated for defense purposes in 1963.

The capabilities of the new Army apparently will be limited to internal security missions, manning of border posts, suppressing any opposition movements incited by subversive forces and discouraging guerrilla activities inspired by Chinese Communists. The superior stamina and fighting qualities of the soldiers would be more than offset by weakness in numerical strength and lack of trained leadership. Discussions in the National Advisory Assembly indicate that the Bhutanese Government relies on India for protection against any major territorial aggression.

THE PEOPLE

The ethnic composition of the population is uncertain. It probably includes, besides the Bhote majority and a large number of Nepalese, a few Indians of various castes and at least two tribal groups, the Lepcha, an indigenous people, and the Santal, whose forebears migrated from the northern part of India's Bihar State.

Because much of the northern area is uninhabitable, the population is distributed mainly along the country's southern border and in the high valleys to the north, particularly those near the western end of the east-west lateral route (see fig. 22). In the broad mountainous region the Bhote are predominant, where as the southern strip contains an ethnically mixed population, among whom Nepalese settlers predominate.

At least two-thirds of the population speaks one or another of a variety of Tibetan dialects, among which there is presumably a high degree of mutual intelligibility. The written language is identical with Tibetan. One of the most widely spoken dialects—probably Den-jong-ke—is Bhutan's language of administration and education. The only minority languages of much importance are Nepali, spoken by the Nepalese settlers, and Bengali and Hindi near the Indian border. The use of Rong-ke is confined to the Lepcha, and the Munda tongue of the Santal is rarely heard. To what extent the native speakers of any of these tongues are able to use any of the Tibetan dialects in their limited contacts with the Bhote is not known. A number of educated Bhote have a good knowledge of Hindi or English, both of which are taught in the schools.

The various Bhote communities within Bhutan appear to comprise a relatively homogeneous group, generally similar in physical type and sharing a common heritage of culture, language and religion. They do not differ greatly from related groups within and outside the country, although minor variations in material culture and appearance distinguish those of the eastern and western parts of the country; the former have their closest affinities with the Bhote Monpa and Sherdukpen of the North East Frontier Agency, the latter with Bhote in the Chumbi Valley of Tibet and Sikkim.

The Nepalese minority is made up largely of Rai, Gurung and Limbu; some are members of strongly Indian-influenced groups, such as the Dhimal and Tharu (Mechi subgroup), and there are probably also small numbers of Pahari of the Brahman and Chetri castes. There is little or no assimilation of this group by the Bhote. Further Nepalese immigration has been prohibited since 1959; since then those already settled in Bhutan, although given citizenship, have been forbidden to move from the southern frontier area, where land has become extremely scarce, to points farther north, a policy which they bitterly resent.

The communities of Bhote agriculturalists in the central mountain region usually consist of a number of small hamlets and isolated homesteads. Individual settlements are separated from one another by formidable barriers of terrain, and journeys between them are always arduous and sometimes dangerous. The distances can be covered only on foot or with pack animals on the steep, rocky trails, which are usually narrow.

In the ethnically mixed region along the southern border, places of settlement are considerably more accessible to one another. The Nepalese live in communities that are more clustered and compact than those of the Bhote, and their homes are usually of less substantial construction than the whitewashed masonry and solid wooden structures typical farther north.

Regardless of their ethnic origins, virtually all Bhutanese are patrilineally organized and, as in Sikkim, frequently found in extended family households, although the nuclear family (a man, his wife and their children) is the most common form.

Among the Bhote, monogamy is the prevalent form of marriage. Formerly, polyandry and more rarely polygyny were also found, but the Maharaja has recently forbidden polyandry and restricted the number of wives in polygynous marriages to a maximum of three. A man must now obtain the permission of his first wife in order to take additional wives; if she is unwilling to accept co-wives, she is free to seek a divorce and obtain separate maintenance or alimony from the husband.

Bhote marriage arrangements include both bride service and bride-price. Since bride service must be rendered by the man to his father-in-law, he normally moves into his wife's household for a period before establishing his own independent household. Occasionally, the young couple may live separately in their own household, the man going daily to work in his father-in-law's fields. The bride-price (usually large) and a dowry are exchanged later, usually after the couple has been living together for about a year.

RELIGION

Approximately 75 percent of the population, including all the Bhote, are Buddhists. The remainder, made up principally of Nepalese and a few Indians, are Hindus, who may be presumed to have retained the popular beliefs and practices of their caste or ethnic group in the area from which they trace their origins.

Buddhism, a dominant force in the national life, is the state religion. Religious as well as secular authority is vested in the Maharaja, and the clergy exercises a powerful influence on national affairs. A lessening of the power of the monasteries is almost inextricably bound up with the modernization process, a circumstance which has caused some alarm among the lamas. However, the pace of change has not been rapid enough as yet to bring the clergy into serious conflict with the forward-looking elite.

There are said to be eight major monasteries (which are also *dzong*) and nearly 200 minor small shrines (*gompa*) scattered throughout the country. Some of the large monasteries, Tashi Chhö Dzong at Thimbu for instance, reportedly are used exclusively as lamaseries and may house several hundred priests; the small shrines are used for worship by lamas and lay persons living in the surrounding area.

The monks and clerics of Bhutan—numbering 4,000 to 5,000—belong to the Drukpa branch of the Kagyutpa, one of the so-called "Red Hat" orders of Tibetan Buddhism. In education they range from the many illiterates to the few who are highly learned men.

The popular attitude toward the clergy is one of respect. Contributions toward their support are freely given, not only because almsgiving is one of the most important means of gaining merit, but also because the services of the lamas are regarded as essential in important life-cycle ceremonies, particularly in reciting scriptural text (sutras) at weddings and conducting funeral rites. The lamas also perform important subsidiary activities such as treating certain types of illnesses, presiding at private religious services, casting horoscopes, teaching the doctrine to those requesting it and performing in the masked dances which correspond to the morality plays of medieval Europe.

Elements of shamanism in the Tibetan form of Bon have become deeply bound up with popular Buddhism as it is practiced in Bhutan. Although the villager usually sees no conflict between formal Buddhist doctrine and practice and retained folk belief, in recent years some of the Buddhist clergy have begun to denounce shamanistic practices particularly witchcraft, as being essentially alien to Buddhism.

Traditionally, the *dzong* have been the centers of artistic and intellectual life and their construction, ornamentation and upkeep have absorbed much of the nation's wealth. High, whitewashed walls are made of earth and stone, windows are deep and richly ornamented, and the sometimes gold-plated pagoda-like roofs are adorned at the corners with dragons' heads. The walls inside are usually covered with murals depicting episodes of Buddhist mythology and miniatures painted in gold on a black background. The style in which they are done resembles that of eastern Tibet. Inside repositories contain copies of the Tibetan scriptures printed from handcarved wooden plates on locally made paper.

The Bhutanese villagers congregate at the *dzong* for the major festivals of Tibetan Buddhism and for seasonal agricultural feasts, such as the winter harvest celebration which occurs about the time of the winter solstice and marks the close of the agricultural year. In the seasonal feasts Buddhism appears to play little part, and participating lamas do so in their role as cultivators or as archers, for archery is a highly popular sport closely associated with all celebrations, whether religious or secular.

THE SOCIETY

Traditionally Bhutanese society was arranged in a fairly rigid hierarchical structure consisting of three basic groups of persons—the nobility, peasantry and slaves. In a special relationship to them was still another hierarchy based on theological training and religious function, the Buddhist clergy, whose members collectively enjoyed high standing in the society whether or not they were of noble birth. Until early in the twentieth century there were two heads of state whose preeminent position was recognized by most Bhutanese—the Deb Raja, or temporal head of state, and the Dharma Raja, or spiritual head.

The nobility, although apparently not differing greatly in its way of life from the remainder of the population, was set apart by its exclusive access to the nation's limited resources and political power. The Deb Raja, the *penlops* (ruling provincial chiefs) and probably most of their subordinate administrators were members of a small landowning nobility.

Nearly all the peasants, who formed by far the largest segment of the population, were tenant farmers living on the semifeudal estates of the nobility. Although their time was spent mainly in working the fields and tending the herds, they appear to have been called up to serve as warriors when fighting broke out between the provincial chiefs. The few remaining persons were slaves, most of them descended from persons captured in Bhote raids on Indian territory during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In the traditional social order the Buddhist clergy no doubt offered the best path to higher status and prestige and, in time of internecine warfare, the armies of the *penlops* may have provided similar opportunities. Individual slaves were probably freed occasionally by their owners, and certain commoners may have been given special marks of favor in return for exceptional services rendered to the rulers. For most, however, the situation was static.

This long-standing order persisted until the reign of the present Maharaja, who since his accession to the throne has initiated several major social reforms. The nobility has been stripped of its hereditary titles; the large estates have been broken up and the slaves—some 5,000 in number—set free. To slaves who did not wish to become employees of their former owners, the Maharaja offered land from his own estates and persuaded other large landowners to follow his example.

As of mid-1964 is was not possible to determine the eventual outcome of these reforms. A core of technicians and skilled workers was to be trained to operate the planned new schools, hospitals and industries; these new occupations and social roles would necessarily make further alterations in the traditional order of the society and its associated values. Noble birth, membership in the order of monks and ownership of land and animals would presumably all decline in importance as new marks of social status emerged and ascribed status gave way to achieved status. Many traditional patterns and values continued to prevail and appeared likely to do so for many years to come. The nobility, although it had lost its hereditary titles, still made up the bulk of the intellectual and administrative elite; the clergy continued in its traditional role; and the mass of the people went on earning its livelihood in the traditional ways as small cultivators, stockbreeders or traders.

THE ECONOMY

A predominantly agrarian country, Bhutan is favored by natural resources and fertile soil. Its economic development, however, is hampered by the limited land available for cultivation and the country's general inaccessibility and lack of transport facilities, qualified technicians, modern equipment and convenient markets.

Land Use

Topography, climate and rainfall combine to severely limit land use. Because the generally rugged character of the country is interrupted by only a few scattered wide places in the valleys, the land available for agriculture is extremely small. About 70 percent of the total area is covered with forests; most of the remainder consists of savannah in the subtropical south, alpine meadows and permanent snow in the north.

The mountain valleys in which most agriculture is concentrated are fertile and well watered, but the mountains themselves act as barriers against precipitation, so that the protected slopes on the leeward side receive less rainfall than those on the opposite side. Almost all agricultural land is irrigated, including some of the rice fields on the terraced foothills.

Land Tenure

The Maharaja has given high priority to land reform, restricted individual ownership of land to 30 acres, and distributed all of his own holdings except that amount. As a result almost all farmers own their own land and tenancy is rare. All forests belong to the Crown, but villagers have the right to collect firewood, manure and compost in the forest adjoining the village.

Land tax is the government's most important source of revenue. The *dzong* serve as collection centers for taxes paid in homespun cloth, dried yak meat, rice, wheat and butter. The Maharaja is also modernizing the tax system, and on a trial basis the payment of tax in kind has been replaced in some regions by cash.

Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Most Bhutanese engage in agriculture, women working alongside men in the fields. Farms are located in river valleys and on the adjoining slopes of the mountains, with fields laid out in a series of terraces built up on, and divided by, stone embankments fenced with pine branches. Most fields are irrigated by long stone aqueducts or canals maintained by the village. Sometimes within a single valley terraces may be found on slopes at elevations ranging from 4,000 to 9,000 feet, making it possible to produce a wide variety of crops. Bhutan's main crop is rice, grown at elevations up to 4,000 feet; barley is grown up to 8,000 feet and wheat to 9,000 feet. Potatoes, radishes and turnips are also raised. In the southeastern part of the country, market gardening has been developed and there are orchards of tangerines, oranges and bananas.

Most farmers keep livestock: buffalo in the south, cattle at lower altitudes and yaks at higher. They also raise sheep, goats, pigs and chickens. Those Bhutanese, who are more stockbreeders than farmers, live almost entirely in the northern mountains where they use the alpine pastures for grazing in the summer months, driving cattle up to 14,000 feet and yaks to even higher elevations. Horses (of a small native breed used as pack animals) and mules are also numerous.

Under the Five-Year Plan (1961–66), government orchards to grow apple, apricot, peach and other fruit trees have been started and an animal husbandry and a piggery center opened. A Department of Agriculture is to be established; a research institute, demonstration dairy farm and veterinary hospital are also planned. Some Bhutanese are under training in India to staff these organizations.

Forestry

Forests are extensive and a great potential source of wealth, but they are not exploited other than as grazing grounds because cheap transport is not available. The Five-Year Plan proposes the establishment of a Department of Forestry, the demarcation of forests, surveys of medicinal plants and paper pulp resources, and the training of forestry officers. Preliminary surveys have established the feasibility of a resin-tapping and turpentine factory, and some timber can be used to make packing cases. To overcome the transport problem, studies are being made of the possibility of building ropeways and of using rivers whose flow is steady throughout the year.

Minerals, Power, Industry and Handicrafts

In its investigation of the rich mineral resources of the country the Geological Survey of India team of geologists has discovered commercially valuable deposits of copper, mica, gypsum and iron ore. Dolomite has been exported to India since 1960. Under the Five-Year Plan the 30,000-ton annual coal production from mines in the south is to be doubled for export to the tea gardens of Assam. Quarries of graphite await development, and there are plans to make use of gypsum to manufacture some types of crude fertilizer.

Indian engineers, with a view to the production of hydroelectric power, have been surveying Bhutan's many rivers and streams for likely dam sites. A number of small stations to be established at Paro Dzong, Thimbu, Tashi Chhö Dzong, Wangü Phodrang, Byakar Dzong, Mongar Dzong, Tashi Gang Dzong, Tongsa Dzong, Ha Dzong, Sarbhang and Samdrup Jonghkar have been recommended. Already under construction on the Jaldhaka River (flowing from Bhutan into West Bengal) is a power project financed by the West Bengal government. Under a pact signed by the two governments, Bhutan will receive 250 kilowatts daily free of charge. The West Bengal government will also pay the Bhutan Government an annual royalty of IR8 per kilowatt for the rest of the power, estimated at 18,000 kilowatts, generated from the project, which is scheduled for completion in 1965.

Industry is negligible but is represented by a fruit-preserving plant (which processes oranges and pineapples) and a distillery, both located at Samchhi. The establishment of other small enterprises to produce horseshoes, power looms, sports goods, utensils, leather goods and wood products is contemplated. The most important project, however, is the paper pulp plant to use the pines in the upper reaches of the Wong Chu River, a project which has been surveyed and recommended by both a Swedish and a Japanese firm. Handicrafts are widespread; the Bhutanese, noted as skilled craftsmen, produce fine metalwork, particularly copper utensils ornamented with silver. Woodcarving is a specialty, along with the ancient art of weaving woolen and cotton fabrics. Another important craft is the production from the bark of local bushes of handmade paper, exported in large quantities to other Himalayan regions.

Trade and Transport

Trade with Tibet provided a great source of income to Bhutanese traders before 1953. It consisted of the export of woolen cloth, spices, rice, food grains, handmade paper and yak cheese and the import of wool, salt and yak herds. Rice was particularly important, since it sold for IR180 per *maund* (82 pounds) in Tibet as compared with IR15 per *maund* in Bhutan. The Bhutanese Government decided to end this flourishing trade relationship in 1953, however, because of Communist Chinese aggressions in Tibet and the reported efforts to subject Bhutanese merchants to political indoctrination while they were in that country. Almost all trade has been with India since then. India supplies kerosene, gasoline, sugar and cotton textiles, and Bhutan exports dolomite, coal and agricultural produce (including rice) to Indian markets. The 1949 treaty with India provides for free trade between the two, and the Reserve Bank of India makes exchange available to the Bhutanese Government to finance imports. The total annual imports, however, are estimated at no more than IR300,000.

Construction of a network of new roads, financed and built under Indian direction, facilitated the expansion of trade with India after 1960. Although it had been prompted more by strategic than by economic considerations, the new Indian trade helped to alleviate the resentment Bhutanese merchants expressed at the cut-off of their profitable rice trade with Tibet. The roads were being built by Indian engineers and some 24,000 Bhutanese laborers, about the maximum that could be spared for road development projects, because of manpower limitations. Every adult living in an area served by one of these roads was legally obligated to contribute 23 days of labor each year or to send a substitute.

Development

The First Five-Year Plan for the country's economic and social development was launched in 1961. The program, prepared with the assistance of a technical team sent by India's Planning Commission, aimed to increase revenues and fully exploit natural resources. The total cost of IR175 million was wholly underwritten by India. Major emphasis is on road building, for which IR101 million has been allocated. IR19 million is to be spent on trucks, buses, motor vehicle repair shops and a telephone system; IR18 million on education; IR12.7 million on mineral development; and the remainder on agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, power and health.

When the present Maharaja, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk, was enthroned on October 27, 1952, the people of the country enjoyed a standard of living better than that prevailing in much of South Asia. Although the standard diet lacked essential vitamins and minerals, nearly everyone had enough to eat and was adequately clothed and housed. On the other hand the country had only a handful of schools, none of which went beyond the primary level, and an estimated 99 percent of the population was unable to read and write. Dysentery, a consequence of poor sanitary conditions, and venereal disease were commonplace throughout the country, whereas goiter, smallpox, malaria, leprosy and tuberculosis were prevalent in particular localities. Modern medical care was almost unknown; when illness struck, the mass of the people turned either to Buddhist priests or sorcerers, depending on the nature of the illness. Water supplies throughout the country were exposed to contamination and pollution.

Under the leadership of the present Maharaja and the Prime Minister, efforts have been made to remedy some of these problems. Programs have been set up for development in both the economic and social spheres, giving the highest priorities to road building, education and health projects, in that order. The blueprint for progress was the Five-Year Plan (1961–66) prepared and financed by India, calling for a total expenditure of IR175 million. Tension caused by the Chinese-Indian clash of October 1962 interfered to a considerable extent with the implementation of the Plan, but some progress has been recorded.

Government officials reported that as of early 1964 about 95 state schools were being operated in parts of Bhutan, providing primary level education for some 15,000 pupils. In addition, an unknown number of young persons, some of whom would eventually join the Buddhist clergy, were being given religious instruction in the monastaries. As yet the country had no secondary school, but one such institution was scheduled to be opened by Jesuit missionaries in the eastern region before 1965. Moreover, the government, having discontinued its policy of opposition to the entry of foreigners, was looking to India for recruits for teaching posts in Bhutan and had opened the way for several hundred youths to study in India. Most of them were in Darjeeling.

Indian aid was also being used toward the development of medical services and raising the low level of health. As of early 1964 there were two small, ill-equipped hospitals—one at Thimbu and the other at Paro Dzong—and a few dispensaries. More were to be built and some mobile units introduced. Also scheduled were the organization of a health directorate, campaigns to eradicate various endemic diseases, and the improvement of the water supply. American and British physicians and Catholic missionaries had been invited to participate in the medical program.

Efforts were being made to lessen the isolation of the population in the high valleys of the center, where means for the communication of ideas other than word of mouth hardly existed beyond some ancient Tibetan manuscripts and a few outdated newspapers and magazines published abroad. Development of communications was slow, but by early 1964 radio had assumed some importance. Bhutan House, a building at Kalimpong where the Maharaja usually spends part of the year, was linked by radio with government offices in Thimbu. Eight wireless stations had been put into use in different parts of Bhutan itself; radio receivers were found in some monasteries; and some road construction workers owned transistor sets.

Another problem for Bhutan was the future of the roughly 4,000 Tibetan refugees who had entered the country after the Chinese Communist takeover of Tibet. Plans to use them in road construction work where additional labor was badly needed had not worked out successfully, and it remained for government authorities to find another solution. A proposal to resettle most of the refugees in northeast Bhutan was being considered.

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GLOSSARY

anchal—Zone. The largest unit of administration below the national level.

bada hakim—District governor. The chief administrative officer in the traditional structure of territorial administration.

Bhote (also called Bhotea and Bhotiya, from the Tibetan name for Tibet)—Generic name for ethnically Tibetan groups in the higher Himalayan valleys along the Tibetan border areas of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan.

bigha—Land unit. One *bigha* equals 1.67 acres.

birta—Land from which revenues were allocated to individuals under the Ranas. The word birta is commonly translated as tax free in lieu of a long explanation.

Bon—The Buddhist-influenced shamanistic religion of Tibet which has spread to Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan along with Lamaist Buddhism.

Colombo Plan—A program for economic development agreed upon at Colombo, Ceylon, in 1950. Originally an arrangement among British Commonwealth nations for aiding Asian members, it has subsequently been broadened to include other Asian countries. The United States has also become associated with it.

Dalai Lama—The spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet. The sixteenth Dalai Lama has been living in Mussoorie, India, since his flight from Tibet during the Chinese Communist suppression of a general rebellion there in 1959.

dewan—Indian-appointed official in Sikkim with functions similar to those of a prime minister.

dzong—A fortress-like religious center in Bhutan, which may function as a district administrative headquarters as well. Also, an administrative district.

East India Company—A company organized in 1600 in England for trading in India and the Far East. About 1765, jointly with the British Crown, it became the ruling power in India. Despite several reorganizations it continued to administer British India until 1858, when Company rule was superseded by that of the Crown, after the Indian Mutiny.

gaun—Village.

gompa—Buddhist temple and, by extension, Buddhist temple school in which religiously oriented instruction on the primary level is provided.

Gorkha Dal—Militant political group organized in 1951 in an effort to regain power for the Rana prime ministers.

Gurkha—Term loosely applied to various Nepalese ethnic groups—particularly the Magar, Gurung and Rai—from which recruits traditionally have been drawn by the British and Indian Armies. The term is derived from the name of the early Kingdom of Gorkha. Also an administrative district west of Katmandu.

Gurung—Ethnic group found mainly on the south flank of the Annapurna massif. Some Gurung have migrated to Sikkim and Bhutan.

guthi—Land providing income for the endowment of shrines, rest houses, schools and orphanages.

ilaka—District in the traditional administrative structure.

jilla—Currently, a district or development block. Formerly, a subdivision of a district (*ilaka*). Sometimes referred to as a *zilla*.

jungpen—Governor or chief of a *dzong* in the early Bhutanese governmental system.

Kagyutpa—One of the so-called "Red Hat" orders of Buddhist monks. It predominates in the Lamaist Buddhism of Nepal and Sikkim. The Bhutanese monks belong to a branch of this order.

Kazi—Sikkimese hereditary nobility.

Khampa—A Tibetan (Bhote) ethnic group from which the Dalai Lama's army was largely recruited. Many members of the group took refuge in Nepal and Sikkim after the Chinese Communist invasion and conquest of Tibet. (Literally, the people of Kham, a province of eastern Tibet.)

Kiranti (also Kirat)—A group of languages spoken in eastern Nepal, which includes Rai, Limbu, Thami, Dhimal and Hayu; by extension, the groups speaking these languages. The Kiranti regard themselves as descended from the Kirata, the first historically known inhabitants of the Katmandu Valley.

Kirata (also called Kiranta)—The earliest known inhabitants of the Katmandu Valley. The present-day Kiranti peoples claim descent from them.

Lepcha (also called Lapche, Rong)—An ethnic group indigenous to Sikkim and neighboring parts of India and Bhutan which, since 1826, has also lived in eastern Nepal (Ilam District).

Limbu (also called Subba, Ektampa, Yakthumba)—A Kiranti-speaking ethnic group in the Eastern Mountain Region near the boundary with Sikkim. Many Limbu have migrated to Sikkim, Bhutan and India.

Magar (also called Mangar)—Ethnic group on the western and southern flanks of the Dhaulagiri massif. Some members have migrated to Sikkim.

Maharaja—Title assumed by the ruling Rana prime ministers.

mal adda—District office for the collection of land taxes.

maund—A unit of weight equal to 82 pounds.

most-favored-nations clause—A clause in commercial treaties specifying that if one of the two signatories subsequently grants a commercial favor, such as a tariff reduction, to a third country, the other signatory will be granted the same favor.

nagar—Town.

National Advisory Assembly (Tsongdu)—The legislative and advisory body of the Bhutanese Government. Created in the mid-1950's. Membership about 140.

Nepal Labor Organization—A workers' organization. It is governed by an executive committee at the national level, the majority of whose members are elected successively from local or plant, district and zonal labor organizations.

Newar—An ethnic group constituting about half the population of the Katmandu Valley.

Pahari (also called Parbate, Khasiya and Khasa)—An ethnic and linguistic category of Hindu caste groups in the Himalayan areas of western India and Nepal. Many Pahari have migrated from Nepal to Sikkim, Bhutan and West Bengal in the last 100 years.

paisa—Monetary unit. One paisa equals one-hudredth of a rupee.

panchayat—A council or executive committee.

penlop—A provincial governor in the early Bhutanese governmental system.

Rai (also called Jimdar, Khambu-Yakka and Kiranti)—A Kiranti-speaking ethnic group of eastern Nepal, many of whose members have migrated to Sikkim, Bhutan and West Bengal.

Raksha Dal—A paramilitary force organized during the revolt of 1950–51 by the Nepali Congress party. Consisting of about 5,000 men—mainly former insurrectionists—it was taken over by the new government in February 1951 as a counterforce to the Army which, on the whole, had been loyal to the Rana ruler during the revolt. One section was disbanded early in 1952; later in the year other units were incorporated into the Army or the civil police.

ropani—Land unit. One *ropani* equals one-eighth of an acre.

ropeway—An electrically driven endless traveling cable supported by towers, and from which freight-carrying steel bins are suspended.

rupee—Monetary unit used in Nepal, India and several other countries such as Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon. The Nepalese rupee has a normal exchange rate of 7.6 to the U.S. dollar or $0.13158. The rate of exchange for the Indian rupee is 4.81 to the U.S. dollar or $0.2079.

sabha—An assembly.

Singha Durbar—Central office building of the government in Katmandu. It contains some 1,200 rooms; was once the palace of the ruling Rana family.

Sunwar—An ethnic group in the mountains northeast of the Katmandu Valley.

Tamang (also called Murmi)—An ethnic group in the mountains northwest, north and east of the Katmandu Valley.

Tharu—Ethnic group in the Tarai. In eastern Nepal and Sikkim, they are usually called Mechi.

tshong—Term used by Sikkimese to refer collectively to Buddhist Nepalese whose forebears settled in the country in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They are mainly Magar, Limbu and Gurung.

Tsongdu—The 140-member legislative and advisory body in Bhutan, created in the mid-1950's. It is commonly translated as the National Advisory Council.

Vajrayana—A school of Buddhism developed in India later than the Hinayana and Mahayana schools. It was developed by the Newar Buddhists and became the basis of Tibetan Buddhism or Lamaism.

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